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Encounter

JANUARY 1970
VOL. XXXIV NO. 1

Edited by MELVIN J. LASKY *and* NIGEL DENNIS

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS: *Goronwy Rees, Maurice Cranston, Anthony Hartley, John Mander, John Weightman.*
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Published monthly at 25 Haymarket London SW1. Per copy: UK 7s: USA & Canada $1.25: India Rs. 4.80. Back numbers: 7s. ($1·25). Annnal sub.: UK £4.0.0: USA & Canada $14 (by air $15.50): India Rs. 54: Elsewhere £4.19.0. Full-time students (state place and course of study): U.K. 63s.: U.S.A. & Canada $10; elsewhere 63s. Trade/Subscriptions: Encounter Ltd., 25 Haymarket London S.W.1 (01–839 7667).
US & Canadian Subscriptions: British Publications Inc. 30th East 60th Street New York, N.Y. 10022. US newstand distribution by Gordon & Gotch (USA) Inc. 485 Fifth Avenue New York 10017 (MU 7–2645). Authorised as second-class mail, Post Office Department, Ottawa, and for the payment of postage in cash. Second-class postage paid at New York, N.Y. *© 1969–70 by Encounter Ltd.*

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Letter from New York

By John Mander

No doubt of it, America today is slightly mad. Luther-like, on Riverside Drive, a Protestant minister pins his demands to a Church door: $500 million compensation to the Fundamentalists, for the harm done to America since the drift away from Fundamentalism began a century ago. Well, and why not? The sum, the minister points out, is only that demanded by Black militants from the Churches for connivance in the institution of slavery—and conceded. But then, of course, why not the Red Indians, the value of whose alienated real estate would be enough to send the Blacks back where they came from, and very probably the Whites into the bargain. And what about the Spaniards, the Mexicans, the French, the Dutch, or indeed the British, whose rights over the territory were most violently alienated? Colonialists, you may reply. But more so really than the buffalo-hunters or the victors of the 1846 Mexican-American war? The mind boggles. Had I been fed on some of that "Confusion Powder" which can be obtained, I gathered from the *New York Times* (15 September 1969), from a gentleman who does a flourishing business in a Puerto Rican section of the South Bronx? God preserve us, one must pray, from a general righting of ethnic wrongs down to the third and fourth generation.

Among her other ills, America seems to me to be mad with frustrated righteousness. One's attention is drawn, by dint of repetition or spasmodic violence, to the righteousness felt to be inseparable (by both Blacks and Whites) from the Negro cause. Right, one feels, is altogether too close to righteousness for comfort. The argument that begins with an appeal to civil rights (and, bless America, how sensitive she still remains to it) ends too easily with an appeal to righteousness all round—whether it be baiting the "pigs," calling for reparations, bearing arms on campus, or demanding automatic quotas and passes in academic examinations—you name it, they can justify it. Is such behaviour un-American? Surely not: it goes to show how powerfully Black America has absorbed part, at least, of the Protestant ethic. Are the attitudes of the newly-enraged White ethnics—destined to play their part in President Nixon's "Emerging Republican Majority"—any less self-righteous? The ethnics seem to have taken over from an older, Wasp America, precisely that attitude of "We Built America" which leads logically to a claim to rights in American society that are at the same time mightily self-righteous. The point, I suppose, is that in any American arguments both sides demand a monopoly of righteousness. As David Riesman writes (Encounter, October 1969):

> Thus, this characteristically American belief that one must not only see straight but be sincere and act straight may at times give hegemony to the complacent, at other times to those capable of great moral outrage and dedication.

Just so: and one would expect an American civil war to be bloodier than most known to history, would one not? One would not be wrong.

Going along with this rage for righteousness—does it proceed from it logically, or is it among its causes?—there seems to me in America today a prevailing cult of subjectivity, which can alarm the foreigner even more than the true-born American:

> Save for the war, the nation's brooding is almost exclusively inward. Only two per cent of the sampling thought to mention nuclear war as a problem facing the country; fewer than one per cent listed Russia or Red China. (*Newsweek*, 6 October)

I tend to take the books on show in a city's display-windows as fair indication of what

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people are reading and (here one is less sure) thinking. What do you see in New York and other major cities? A lot that's predictable, naturally: *The Life of Malcolm X*, *The Confessions of Nat Turner*, *The Peculiar Institution*, *The Wretched of The Earth*, *Soul On Ice*—though not of course Jimmy Baldwin whose colour appears to have been washed away in the flood of militancy that has swept America these past years. But Blackness is not all. Camus is still there and, of course, Herbert Marcuse and Erich Fromm and Noam Chomsky and Christopher Lasch. But it's hard to help noticing (I did a similar job earlier this year on some student bookshops in, of all places, Palermo) that the real Marxist classics—the hard stuff, as you might say—are not so easy to track down. Selections from Marx and Engels, and Trotsky and Mao, there certainly are. But you would be hard put to find an unabridged edition of the *Eighteenth Brumaire*, *The Dialectics of Nature*, or *Das Kapital* itself. All these you find, even in so remote a province of Europe as Palermo; and they proliferate, I know well, on the Left Bank, in Frankfurt, and even in the Charing Cross Road. And—I had almost forgotten—you find, greatest surprise of all, the works, the *complete* works, of Hermann Hesse, from *Unterm Rad* to *Das Glasperlenspiel*. (There is a well-known American pop group called "Steppenwolf.") Nothing can make you feel (as Walter Laqueur remarked of his students in the October ENCOUNTER) so immediately transported to the doom-laden, youth-worshipping atmosphere of Weimar Germany as the hallucinatory vision of Hesse's titles in a New York bookshop.

So how does one explain it? Nobody, obviously, is going to make a coherent ideology out of it all—which, one feels, French or German or Palermitan students would like to do, if only it were possible. To dismiss this "revolutionary" literature as just another form of tokenism would certainly be unfair. Something is brewing there; but nobody's quite sure what. My guess would be—and I found this confirmed in conversation and debate—that coherent ideology is not all that important in "the American Revolution" (if, indeed, it is a Revolution). What matters is the intensity and sincerity with which certain views are held, not so much their content. This is not quite, I feel sure, what Daniel Bell meant when he wrote *The End of Ideology* back in the abominated 1950s. For, in one sense, ideology has come back in a big way. Herman Hesse offers, after all, not only certain emotional links with the *Jugendbewegung*. (It is perhaps interesting that today's young students, like the *Wandervogel* and indeed the Nazis, refer to their activities as "the movement," *die bewegung*: America's rigid *structures* are obviously anathema.) Hesse also offers a *Weltanschauung* of a sort, particularly in his last work, *Das Glasperlenspiel*, which provides an obvious link with Allen Ginsberg and his infant prodigals, the hippies. It is, I admit, a book I've never summoned up the energy to penetrate. How seriously should it be taken? Heaven knows. I suspect: not very. It is certainly a far cry from Daniel Bell's neo-pragmatism. And Hesse was most certainly a great prophet of subjectivity.

MOST UNIVERSITY TEACHERS (those, that is, who have squeaked through the militant years physically unscathed) seem nevertheless to agree that this open-spiritedness, this *Bildungsromanschwärmerei*—German is the only language for such things—is one of the more attractive features of this generation. Not many, I suspect really believe America is on the brink of revolution. (A reading of Marx and Lenin would swiftly disillusion them: personally, I suspect that this is why they are not read.) But they do, in a vague, irrational and sometimes charming way, want to "make all things new." Just why this wave of anarchic "enthusiasm" (as used by Ronald Knox in his study of *Enthusiasm*) should have swept America, or indeed Europe and the Third World, at this precise moment is as much a puzzle to me as to the next man. I have no doubt that the Viet Nam war has a lot to do with it—though not quite in the way that is often stated. Mr. Donald Davie has written in these pages of a loss of nerve on the part of our British Creons, and of a swarming, irreconcilable mob of Antigones at the gate. He is speaking of Britain, but the mythology strikes me as fitting present-day America no less well—except that in America I would bet that a Gallup Poll would reveal at least ten mute Creons for every loquacious, demonstrating Antigone. Even Mr. Davie cannot find America (unless he too, by some strange chance, believes in Revolution?) exactly an Antigone-ridden country. In America, Antigone is most likely a WAM, reads Fromm, Fanon, and Hesse (the combination alone is mind-blowing), whose trips consist, no longer of those highly perilous

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vote-registering trips to the South of the early '60s, but of something rather different, and certainly more subjective. But this is perhaps too negative a picture. Antigone, her teachers agree, is not an unwilling or disagreeable student. Where she is not too emotionally committed (by emotional commitment, it will be understood, I do not mean *love*—for that there is always sex—I mean political conviction, however subjective) she is extremely open-minded, more truly feminist (yet less vehemently so) than her mother, and a serious worker. Some of her sisters are not averse to putting Fanon's ideas into action, mistaking, as it were, a mild college dean for a *para*). But the majority are probably more genuinely free of parental prejudice than ever before, and are quietly reading at their *Bildungsroman*, propped up on a dormitory pillow.

ON MY RIGHT, then, the Creons; on my left, the Antigones. The Antigones think they are going to win (half of America will soon be under twenty-five), and the Creons are determined not to let it happen. But could it happen? Well, there are lies, as we know, damn lies, and statistics. And the sad thing is that most of that youthful 50 per cent will be under voting age (unless that is changed, which does not seem likely right now), and the rest will no more be one-and-twenty, but have become part of that most unspeakable of generations, the over-30s. At the polls, then, Creon is going to win hands down: America is growing older too, and there are plenty of Ismenes—I dare say a majority among the younger generation—who will go for his ticket in any case. So it is difficult for the foreigner, if he cares for America, to know whether to be more worried about her Creons or her Antigones. Personally, I feel it is more justifiable, at the moment, to be more worried about America's Creons—worried because they are going to win, and yet will prove such sorry winners. Partly I have in mind Mr. Kevin Philips' *The Emerging Republican Majority*, but I am also thinking of the bitter struggle of "ethnic" construction workers to keep Blacks out of the unions they control. If President Nixon really succeeds in winning the allegiance of the ethic working class, the Democratic party and progressive legislation in general will not figure largely in the history of the 1970s.

What worries me—and I'm sure many others —is not so much that the Creons' party is going to win, but (paradoxically) that they should look so little like winning men. I'm not thinking here only of the President's own much-abused, fatally untelegenic, woeful countenance—though that seems an apt symbol of it. What I mean is the impression the foreigner cannot help getting that in Viet Nam—to put it bluntly—the Americans are on the run. The statistics bear this out, adding their own note of bewilderment. Only 8 per cent believe the war is being won. But whereas 60 per cent say that the U.S. was justified originally in intervening in the war, 70 per cent argue that, *justified or not*, "the nation should have kept its sons at home." What does one make of this? When the going was good (or at least the White House said that it was) the hawkish poll hovered in that region too. My impression now (brashly produced in conversation and received in shocked, or possibly very polite silence) is that it would take a great deal more courage to speak out for the war today than it ever did to speak against it. Possibly I overestimate; but not, I think, much.

There remains the puzzle: how come that 60 per cent think the war "justified," and yet 70 per cent want the U.S. out? Well, it's not difficult to think of a reason; but it's a reason hardly flattering to the U.S., and implicitly alarming to her friends. The new Creons are not winning men. As statesmen they are going to be, whatever the President may say, the first losers in American history; and defeated nations are dangerous. Will bringing the boys home from Viet Nam soothe the ghettos and the students, and make money available for poverty programmes? We have been officially warned, already, that it won't. And what of that pent-up American righteousness? It is there, plain to see, in the obvious lack of guilt felt by that 60 per cent: Creon is no less self-righteous than Antigone. But, equally plainly, it is not the reason why the majority want to pull out of the war. Quite simply, they've had enough of a war that they can't win, *justified or not*. It all begins to sound a little like old Ambassador Kennedy's verdict on Britain in 1940; or maybe, more charitably, it is how all of us would behave in a like situation.

But all that righteousness, poured into Viet Nam and into anti-Viet Nam, somehow it must find an outlet, surely? Where will it find one? A psychiatrist, working on Viet Nam veterans, has argued that the combination of his men's sufferings and the growing sentiment that

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America's crusade in Viet Nam made no sense anyway, or was even wicked, is likely to prove an explosive mixture. The outlet closest to hand seems pretty clear: the Streets, the Ghettos, the Campuses. I have always half-suspected that the war in Viet Nam was being fought at least as much in the fantasy-lives of American television-viewers as in the jungles of the Mekong delta. (Much the same is true, I suspect, of that "spectre" that has haunted modern America: Communism. Anti-Communism—whoever *met* a Communist?—was always a pretty subjective matter.) This seems confirmed if you ask any Antigone what is going to happen to those hundreds of thousands who now rely on American protection and, in the last resort, their lives. War-mongers, profiteers, lackeys of imperialism: they'll be shot, of course, but what else do they deserve? Perhaps it is only because I have been in Viet Nam and met some of these people that I find this a strangely callous response, especially from a generation that prates of loving all the world (even the fuzz, remember?). Again one is struck by the odd subjectivity of such arguments, on both sides of the line. But then, if George Kennan is right, America's Creons have always had more than a touch of this, whether in peace or war.

> This episode has remained in my mind as the first of many lessons I was destined to receive, in the course of a long diplomatic career, on one of the most consistent and incurable traits of American statesmanship—namely, its neurotic self-consciousness and introversion, the tendency to make statements and take actions with regard not to their effect on the international scene to which they are ostensibly addressed, but rather to their effect on those echelons of American opinion to which the respective statesmen are anxious to appeal. The question becomes not: how effective is what I am doing in terms of the impact it makes on our world environment? But rather, how do I look, in the mirror of democratic American opinion, as I do it? Do I look shrewd, determined, defiantly patriotic, imbued with the necessary vigilance before the wiles of foreign governments? If so, this is what I do, even though it may prove meaningless, or even counter-productive, when applied to the realities of the external situation. (George Kennan, *Memoirs*, p. 54.)

What do Creons do when they get frustrated with righteousness, a righteousness which all the "arrogance of power" cannot relieve? Psychologically, there seems only one answer. They find themselves a new enemy; and in this case they do not have far to look. Who needs the couch more: Antigone or Creon?

Of course, Antigone has the American myth on her side: the young are right, because they are the future; the old are wrong, because they represent the past, and all that America is escaping from. A true conservatism, notoriously, has never flowered on the soil of the Great Republic. But the young, for all their openness to new ideas, provide no corrective to the pervading unrealism. I had written, as it happened, a "Defence of the 1950s" for an American magazine. It was a provocative thing to do, I dare say: and I expected the odd brickbat. But I also expected, naïvely, *dialogue*—an in-word if ever there was one. Nothing of the kind. Those of my own generation in the 1950s seem to find it congruent with their own time of *Sturm und Drang*. The 1950s had not been simply an age of placidity and acquiescence; they had started out tough, but they had been on the whole a good time to grow up in. By which I mean that we had learnt something. In Manhattan I showed this mild apologetic to a young friend of the family—*aet.* 24—and waited, hopefully, for the dialogue to begin. I got, not a dialogue, but a deluge. What did I understand of the plight of the Blacks? (Well, only what I'd read: but that was all she knew either.) Didn't I realise that history today just couldn't be seen from a "Western" point of view any more, that it was the new perspective of the developing peoples that mattered now? (I stood my ground on this one: I had visited these countries, and read a bit about them; she hadn't.) And anyhow, how could I, as a White, middle-class, well-nourished, over-thirty, hope to understand the way the *Zeitgeist* was moving—namely, towards Revolution. (Unfairly, perhaps, I could have got Antigone there; for her skin was white as milk, and she was as middle-class as I.) But where, where was the dialogue? *Dialogue?* How can you expect dialogue between one who sees things in this light, and a self-confessed revisionist wreck in his middle-thirties. It would not have done to have replied: My dear, you will be thirty one day too, and then you too will be for the rubbish heap of history. For by then, hopefully, the Revolution will have arrived and we shall none of us have to grow up any longer. But no, that would have been ungallant and would have fallen, anyway, on deaf ears. There will be no dialogues, thank you; you are either *dans le vrai*, or you are not. Another move, and there would have been angry, tearful reproaches: all hell would have been let loose. I was back, I saw, to square one: it's not

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what you believe that matters, but how strongly you believe it. I should have known better. In the land of the true believer, subjectivity is king.

DIALOGUE proving an unwilling horse, I was forced back on my own reflections. Two things, in particular, bothered me. There is, obviously, a strange, inconsistent, and perhaps explosive mixture of pacifism and violence in "the movement." And I was not able to accept the proffered explanation that violence against the Negro-baiting fuzz, the South African *baas*, the Pakistani moneylender, the Peruvian landowner, the Israeli occupier and so on was not violence but, dialectically, its opposite—since it is against a violence that upholds the present power-structure. Put like that, one can never wholly disagree, since that would force one into the pacifist corner, which I find equally unacceptable. But I hold, nevertheless, to the simple-minded, but well-proven view that violence is violence is violence—and that it breeds by contagion. Immersing myself for a moment in an imaginary think-tank, I put to myself a hypothetical question: What would have happened to America's youngest generation if student status had *not* automatically conferred immunity to the draft (as in Korea, or the Second World War)? Suppose, for the sake of example, the young had been offered a choice between several kinds of National Service: 18 months in the armed forces, or 18 months Peace-Corps-type social work, *either* in Viet Nam, *or* in the Third World, *or* in the ghettos of American cities. An unreal hypothesis? I'm not so sure. One thing, certainly, might have been achieved. It would have been clear to every family in the nation that this was indeed a time of national crisis—as, of course, the young were continually proclaiming. Part of the trouble with America-in-Viet-Nam has always been—or so it seems to me—that the American people, and indeed their elected representatives (the Tonkin Bay Resolution), were never actually *told* whether they were faced with a national crisis or not. Lyndon Johnson obviously thought so, but for some reason never could put the matter straight to the nation. (Was he thinking, Kennan-wise, of the figure he was cutting in the national mirror? Was he plagued by doubts, such as we know Roosevelt to have felt before Pearl Harbour?) But how would the young have reacted had Johnson proclaimed truly great goals for his Great Society? They would have been free to choose "pacifism"—but then they would have had to face, not merely to talk about, the problems of poverty in America and the Third World. They would not have felt—and I am sure that this exists as a strong unconscious motive behind "the movement"—the sense of guilt that is inseparable from the knowledge that a war is being fought in your nation's name by the most underprivileged of your fellow-citizens. What I doubt very much is that the sense of alienation between the under-thirties and the rest of society would have grown up, which it is going to take America so long to overcome. Of course, the *SDS* and their allies welcome this alienation; and so would I, if I could feel that it was leading America anywhere useful. But it would have been a neat trick, would it not, had L.B.J. taken the young people at their word and given them the opportunity to do precisely what they were demanding should be done? Too neat, perhaps: but in think-tanks, I understand, such iffy questions are allowable, even mandatory.

THERE REMAINS the Black problem, and the question of heroes. Ask a man who his heroes are, and you have a chance of knowing where he stands. Well, the heroes of the Blacks, and of such allies as they will permit, are pretty predictable: Martin Luther King, Lumumba, Malcolm X, Booker T. Washington, Marcus Garvey, Eldridge Cleaver. There have been some casualties on the way, of course; Richard Wright would be an almost unknown name, and we don't speak about Baldwin any more. The Black literary revolution devours its children. In the further realms of fantasy I should mention, there exists a swarm of potential heroes; but these play a mythical rather than a functional role. There is the Queen of Sheba ("Black is Beautiful"); there is Hannibal, the Mahdi, and of course the Pharaohs—Africans all. I watched a T.V. show on New York's admirable Channel 13 (why is it never mentioned when British and American T.V. are compared?) featuring *Soul* and Mr. LeRoi Jones intoning what, at the risk of being called a racist, struck me as excruciatingly bad poems. These poems were addressed to Allah, and as the show faded out the image of a pyramid and a crescent moon remained on the fluorescent screen. Well, symbols are symbols, and their logic is not to be followed too strictly. Were it

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so followed, St. Augustine would certainly rate as an African, and if Arabs are Blacks (and Allah the god of the Blacks), it is really hard to see why Jesus Christ and the Jews should not be co-opted as well. (There are "Black Jews" in Harlem who believe, apparently, that the Old Testament prophets were Black, and Jesus and his disciples White.) It would make difficulties for the growing and potentially sinister Arab/Black-American alignment; but should help—if logic were logic—to take the steam out of the present Black-Jewish confrontation. Later—or was I dozing off and dreamed it?—there was a short academic discussion on the same channel on the white-hot topic of Black studies. A gentle, bearded Negro, recently appointed to a Black studies professorship, was telling us that Columbus heard reports of "black men" on his first expedition to the Caribbean. Also that Balboa, crossing the isthmus of Panama, had actually passed a convoy of Black traders bearing gold home to Africa. I know a little about Latin America, and neither story has come my way. I asked a distinguished Africanist what he made of this latest claim—that not White Vinlanders or Spaniards, but Black men might be the discoverers of America. (The Amerindians, most unfairly, are never allowed to feature as the true discoverers of America.) He shook his head sadly and murmured, as a White Liberal should, that the field was still "a very open one." Or had it perhaps been a dream after all?

BUT THERE IS ONE HERO who—among Whites at least—far outshines any claim by real or adoptive Blacks. This is Che Guevara. His instant beatification tells one a good deal more, I believe, about young America than at first appears. I have no wish to be in any way snide about Che. He was, it seems to me, a brave, reckless, devoted man, and something of a Don Quixote —which implies both that he was a true and noble idealist in the Hispanic tradition and that, never able to be at home in the world as it was, Che was, if not exactly a saint, a true modern martyr. Other "communist" heroes are admired, and some of them are a wee bit over thirty. I have in mind, naturally, Mao Tse-tung and the late Ho Chi Minh. But these are admired, I am convinced, far less as communists than as nationalists who fought for the liberation of the so-called Third World. Fidel Castro is not markedly in favour, not because he supported Moscow over Czechoslovakia or made a hash of things in Cuba (Cuba, the *real* Cuba, is quite as remote as the Pyramids). No, the true reason is that the charisma he once possessed has passed almost entirely to Che, and with Che into the wild, uncharted jungles of Bolivia. But why the transference? The answer, I believe, is that Castro is seen as having succumbed to the Soviet-style pattern of socialist bureaucracy (though there can have been no less bureaucratically-minded totalitarian ruler since the passing of Adolf Hitler, if Herr Speer is to be believed).

Che Guevara, then, is the original drop-out, the loner, the man who means it, but sees that he can only do it on his own. (*"Che,"* the New York production, showed Che doing his own thing, American-style: *Pravda* condemned it as a prime example of Western decadence). But so much in Che fits the mood and type of the American New Leftist. Che is White; he came of professional, middle-class stock; he trained as a doctor; he was an *Argentino* (the whitest and most middle-class of Latin American countries). He was also a *barbudo*; and there is a thesis to be written one day on the subject of hair in modern revolutionary hagiology. But one point is not perhaps evident to those who do not know Latin America. The beard is the symbol of Western Man. When Montezuma and his paladins first met Cortes, they were amazed: an Amerindian, at bottom of the same racial stock as Ho Chi Minh and Mao Tse-tung, can hope to grow only a somewhat wispy beard. Girls, in Mexico City, let their leg-hair grow freely—the more hair, the less Indian blood, you see, for status is very much a matter of whiteness and hairiness. A small point, perhaps. But it helps to explain the unrealism of the expedition to Bolivia (Bolivia, in so far as it is Indian, is hairless: the *barbudo*, unlike in Cuba, is therefore a sitting target). And it points up the fact that Guevara, like Cortes and those other adventurers and "discoverers" of America was, like Esau, "an hairy man." Myth? Well, Latin America is steeped in it, much more so than the United States. It is surely not insignificant that Che (translation: *mensch!*) was young; that he despised both bourgeois affluence and the dogmatic mind-set of the regular communists; that he dropped out of his place in the hierarchy (admittedly, after his over-ambitious industrialisation plans for Cuba had been torpedoed); and chose possibly the most unsuitable country in Latin America—an apathetic, coca-

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chewing Indian peasantry and all that—to start his "first Viet Nam." None of this, of course, takes away from his heroic ambition. But it suggests to me an instinctive identification with (noble) failure that is all too significant. "Those who have made revolution in America have ploughed the sea," wrote Bolivar. Just so. The tragedy of Che Guevara points the way, I fear, to the tragedy of the New Left and the Black militants in the northern part of the hemisphere. They are brave; they will fight; they will endure. But they will find one day that they have ploughed the sea.

La terreur n'est pas française, declared Rimbaud. Those who are still surprised at that utterance will be no less surprised that insurrectionary terror and guerrilla warfare, in fact Revolution, are not really very deeply American. Che is all too appropriate, too masochistic, a hero for a continent that produces revolutions where nothing really changes, but the gesture is all. Che is, though not quite as Kierkegaard meant it, a hero of subjectivity, a latter-day Knight of Faith. It is the first time for a century and a half that a Latin American has come to seem to many people in North America a symbol of the American virtues. But I cannot see it as other than a sad choice.

So Che is not only a Third World hero but more profoundly, a White liberator of the oppressed, a man in the mould of Bolivar, Wolfe Tone, Kossuth, or even T. E. Lawrence. Like most of the now-divided *SDS* leadership, he is not himself a member of the class he seeks to liberate. But that is true of the other "Liberal" heroes I have instanced as well. What I am suggesting is that it is a great deal easier for the young rebels to identify with a leader of this traditional "European" type than it is with Malcolm X or Eldridge Cleaver (whose followers reject their advances), or for that matter with Hannibal, Mohammed, Lumumba or (my own particular hero) Toussaint L'Ouverture. I see nothing odd or reprehensible in this; indeed it seems to me (though I doubt they would agree) a most traditional identification. Where I disagree is in the matter of diagnosis. I do not think that "revolution" is on the agenda in the United States; and I do not think that the young take it seriously either. One of the inbooks of the moment is Christopher Lasch's *The Agony of the American Left*. Mr. Lasch's account of the American Left over the past sixty years made me, I must say, rather nostalgic (just as the sight of Pete Seeger strumming away on Channel 13 moved me rather more than LeRoi Jones' more contemporary offering). To think that there was a Socialist Party in the U.S. before 1914, which owned 323 publications, had 79 mayors in 24 states, and whose Presidential candidate in 1912 won six per cent of the vote! Not as good as the German *S.P.D.*, perhaps, but some way ahead of the British Labour Party. Mr. Lasch is nostalgic too, and sharply critical of the forces that have brought the American Left to its present agony—so much so that it requires self-restraint at times not to commit the solecism of making a pun on his last name. The Left, God knows, has always been given to self-laceration; but seldom can it have taken so desperate a form.

And Che Guevara is surely the very ikon of this agony. For Che, though not much of an original mind, had pretensions to intellectuality. And in so far as his theories (and those of Régis Debray) in fact cohere, it is hard to imagine any plan of revolution less well-adapted to America, or to any advanced country (or, I would say, to Latin America itself, which is more highly *urbanised* than most of the advanced West). "The guerrilla must learn to swim among the people like a fish in the sea" —so Mao. It is certainly hard to conceive, for the most obvious of reasons, the Blacks of North America achieving this degree of invisibility—which more than anything, perhaps, led to American failure in Viet Nam. But what Che stands for, in most young American minds, is of course a new kind of *urban* guerrilla warfare, in the ghettos or on the campuses. Yet it is clear that guerrillas have *never* succeeded in modern times when they have tried to take and hold a major city against a conventional army: Warsaw, Algiers, Saigon—all go to prove it. It is hardly necessary to argue this in the case of the campus. And the ghettos? Well, I have seen nothing that so resembles the modern Black ghetto as Johannesburg's Orlando; and I think we know what Dr. Vorster's police and army would do if Orlando rose, as did Nazi-occupied Warsaw. The looming disaster, of which few care to speak, is that Black Power may come to mean precisely voluntary encapsulation of this sort—which might suit some of America's new cop-mayors very nicely. Dr. Vorster has been trying to sell such a mild, voluntary version of *apartheid* for quite a time: he would seem to have found some takers.

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SO AGONY it is, and those Christ-like features—not *Christos Pantokrator*, of course, but Christ's bloody visage on the kerchief of St. Veronica—are indeed the appropriate ikon. Does Che live, as a thousand posters proclaim? One dare not doubt it. Che the rootless wanderer, Che the adventurer, Che the *conquistador*, Che the administrator, who came close to wrecking Cuba's economy, and in the end dropped out, only to continue his wanderings in Algeria, the Congo, North Viet Nam, proffering unwanted advice, but believing always in his universal mission. A modern Christ-figure betrayed—was not Christ betrayed by a kiss?—by those he supposed to be his comrades, the communists; and crucified among an ignorant Indian peasantry, who neither understood or cared for his liberating mission. It is not, of course, Americans alone who have taken Che to their heart: he has become, as perhaps he desired, an universal martyr. But Che is the required martyr of a movement that seeks Eldorado, like the American adventurers of old, yet bears with him a sense of doom that has more of Cervantes than Walt Whitman—not to speak of Marcuse, Fromm, Chomsky and others to whom young America listens. "Call me Ishmael," ran Bruno Bettelheim's recent quote in these pages from Melville: "Ishmael, against whom is every man's hand, and whose hand is against every man." Here, as so often in the literature of the Americas, the sense of doom is not denied: it is the implicit counterpart to the dream of Eldorado.

Che Guevara belongs already to that American dream—and to its obverse. But it is not really a way of life for hippies or yippies, for those who preach Soul and universal love, with true early-American enthusiasm. The secret of Che's hold on American youth, I believe, is very different. He told the Bolivian soldier who killed him to have no fear, but to shoot straight. He always knew that his chosen road might lead to death, and when he succeeded briefly, in Cuba, he was quick to opt out, and seek death again. He was no Creon; and I think he owes his following among America's Antigones precisely to this fact. Who better to embody the admitted agony of the American Left than the man who acted out what a million sophomores dream of? That he chose a country whose language he did not speak, where the conditions for revolution, Marxist-style, in no way existed: was it mere ignorance, or was it tilting at windmills? The element of fantasy, of subjectivity, is there, as I have suggested it is not only among America's young Left, but at the heart of the American Establishment.

America, just now, can be a frightening place to a foreigner. A great nation on the run is never a pretty sight. America, I have suggested, is slightly mad—mad at defeat, at new social tensions, mad at the refusal of rational intercourse between the generations. So-called revolution might be a cure, a drastic, old-fashioned purge; but there will be no revolution, except in the hearts and minds of the young. If it looks as if America will be Republican during the 1970s, it seems no less certain that the madness will continue under a President who veers uncertainly from the rhetoric of the barrack-square to the permissive silence of the couch. Mr. Nixon is an unenthusiastic man: the right man, one might think, for enthusiastic times. But lack of enthusiasm, alas, is not enough. Nixon has nothing of Creon in him (Lawrence Ferlinghetti has dubbed him "Tyrannus Nix"). His instinct is to deal with these pent-up frustrations by playing it very softly. He may be right. The alternative is America which—unless the subjectivity has gone so far that people no longer care—will find it difficult to hold the admiration and respect which, despite Viet Nam, have accrued to her since President Roosevelt first dragged her screaming towards the leadership of the Western World.

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Between Fragmentation & Cohesion

En route to the Year 2000 AD — By HAROLD ORLANS

> *"Short as is our life, and feeble as is our reason, we cannot emancipate ourselves from the influence of our environment. Even the wildest dreamers reflect in their dreams the contemporary social state: and much more impossible is it to form a conception of a true political system, radically different from that amidst which we live. The highest order of minds cannot discern the characteristics of the coming period...."*
> AUGUSTE COMTE (1842)

THE AVERAGE NUMBER of marriages is now 6.3 per lifetime; 0 for Hollywood stars, being prohibited as unprofessional conduct and a violation of the terms of standard studio contracts.

As many women as men hold responsible executive positions. Roman-style marriages of older men and young girls are in fashion. Polygamy has been legalised in the ghettos to make the husbands go around further; while, in the suburbs, husbands and wives visit their neighbours' bedrooms as casually as children visit their playrooms. White brothels cater to Negroes, gigolos cater to older women, and male brothels to both men and women. In 1990, ravishing playmate Jane Playme (*magna-cum-laude*, Radcliffe Law School, the refrain of whose anthem goes

I am a
Hon-ey of a
Fi-duc-iary
Ju-dic-iary
Bun-ny)

was installed as the first female Attorney General.

Children have been educated at private, English-cum-military style boarding schools (subsidised by Friedman-Jencks-Dixon[1]-type government grants to their parents), since the Supreme Court 1981 decision pronouncing compulsory public education a violation of the Eighth Amendment's prohibition of cruel and unusual punishment.

Girls and pot (instead of liquor and cigars) are provided routinely at conferences of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. Boys and LSD IV (a fourth-generation drug, with patented dial-a-dream TV-feely feed-back, marketed by a joint-venture of AT&T and the Wilhelm Reich Orgone Institute) are served by less puritanical institutions. Only pep pills and 100 proof liquor are furnished by square organisations such as Dupont, the Department of Defence, and the Brookings Institution.

PORNOGRAPHY ON TV is being broadcast live from Japan *via* moon-station relay under an experimental programme of the University of Hawaii's East West Centre financed by the Ford Foundation and the National Institute of Mental Health. As part of the experiment, a carefully representative panel is able to converse with, and give directions to, the actors. Instructions and performances are, of course, recorded and will be available for re-study by students specially qualified for dispassion.[2]

[1] Milton Friedman of the University of Chicago; Christopher Jencks of the Institute for Policy Studies; and John Dixon, Xerox Corporation and the Commission Working Party on Government in the Year 2000.

[2] *i.e.*, castrates.

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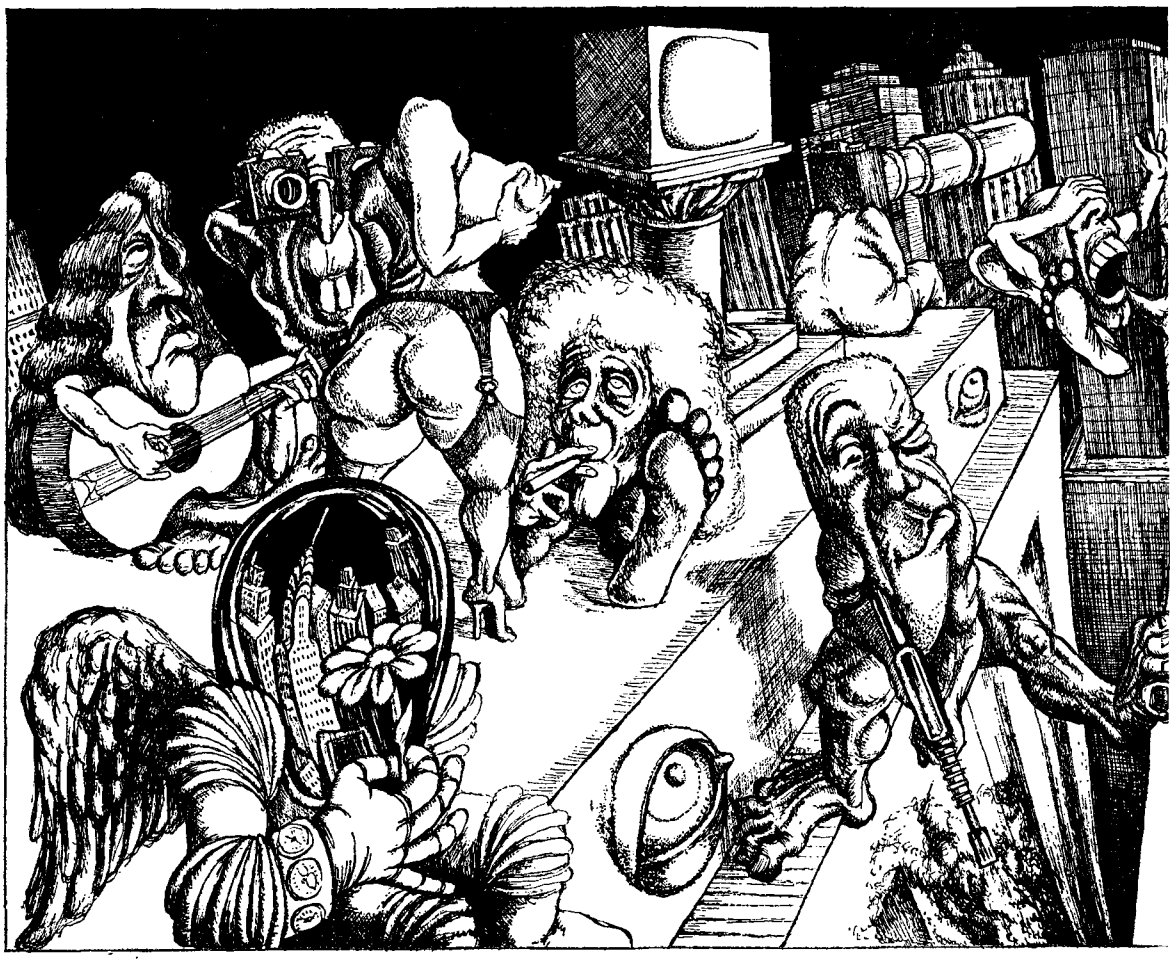
In 1994, the American Civil Liberties Union defended the right of a couple to couple in public. Its position was upheld by the U.S. Supreme Court in a stirring verdict written by newly appointed Associate Justice Playme closing with Webster's famous peroration, "Liberty and Union, now and forever, one and inseparable."

IN THE LATE 1980s, *the nation's most influential intellectuals (like the nuclear physicists in the 1940s) voluntarily agreed not to publish their most important findings and policy recommendations. These have been circulated within the guild (admission to which costs more than a New York taxidriver's medallion) via coded cooperatively owned coaxial cable service managed by a joint committee of the Social Science Research Council and the National Academy of Sciences, and released only to those (governmental or private) clients who can pay what the traffic will bear.*

Through more normal political channels, high-energy physicists persuaded the Government to build an accelerator girdling the moon that can also direct radioactive death rays at any nation. The President of the National Academy of Sciences happily announced the remarriage of pure science and the military, disrupted by guilt-ridden, utopian scientists during the 1970s.

FOR A TIME, the FBI's audacious junior auxiliary the Super Snoopers (or SS) halved the average period the Ten Most Wanted Men remained at large, but the unit was disbanded after three successive directors had been removed for extortion. They were not prosecuted, ostensibly because they were juveniles but in fact because they held, successively, an embarrassing photograph of the FBI director, a letter revealing that the Attorney-General had received 1,000 acres of choice Berkshire woodland to nominate a Harvard law professor to the supreme court, and proof that the President had rigged the pre-election polls and then the circuitry of the computerised voting machines in marginal states to ensure his re-election.



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Silent guns, burglar tools, infra-red telescopic cameras, and electronic eavesdropping and recording devices obtained from mail order houses and Army surplus stores are commonly used by dull youth and bright children for fun, profit, and malice.

City water has been polluted and poisoned so often by delinquents and deranged men that purifiers have been installed on household taps and the well-to-do have returned to the use of well water.

THE UNDERWORLD, grown even more powerful than during Prohibition, has been glorified anew by the cinema and *avant-garde* of the day. Atom bombs stolen from military stores or assembled from plutonium siphoned from nuclear reactors (which now supply 60% of the nation's electric power) with the connivance of bribed or terrorised inspectors have been increasingly employed for financial and political extortion.

Sit-ins, riots, and assassinations have been largely replaced as modes of political and personal protest by ingenious kinds of desecration and sabotage which have been difficult to control because their form and objective has been continually shifting. For example, pacifists have chopped down flagpoles and mutilated statues (particularly of generals); mailed fecal matter to draft boards; released infected lice, roaches, rats and mosquitos at Defence installations; and disabled all toilets at induction centres and railway stations. Militants, of course, have gone much further, sabotaging airport control towers, telephone exchanges, fire stations, and hospital operating rooms; releasing the inmates of jails, asylums, homes for the retarded, and zoos; blowing up, in New York City alone, the Lincoln tunnel and more than thirty subway trains; and (their most outrageous act) napalm-bombing from the surrounding roofs half a million people assembled in Times Square on New Year's eve. Their rationale has been that most politicians are opportunists not worth killing by principled men; it is the people who are responsible for the

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crimes of society and hence it is the people upon whom justice should be pronounced.

CONVENIENT TREES having long since been cut down, white men must now be lynched on city lamp-posts, and blacks on suburban telephone poles. Racial peace reigns in three Deep South states from which the last Negroes departed in 1988 by air-conditioned State limousines. However, for reasons that the National Putnam Letters Committee is investigating, the crime rate continued to rise despite their departure. Committee psychologists believe black blood still flows in white veins, while committee sociologists suspect that slaves corrupted their masters.

As the suburbs were methodically burned out by urban rioters, the middle classes withdrew to moated skyscrapers, commuting to work, window to window, by Defence-issue armoured one-man back-pack jet originally developed for overseas duty; the towers are guarded by paralysing and death rays operated by guards from TV monitors in plush underground bunkers.

EVERY CITIZEN 7 *and over has new, used, or rusty firearms, and bowls of free bullets have been added to those for mints and matches beside restaurant cashiers. Many of the arms were issued for the use of local citizens' militia, and others for a subscription to the illustrated monthly magazine of the amalgamated National Rifle Raffle Association and the American Morticians' Association. (Having vindicated the right of adults to defend themselves by a simultaneous muster of their members outside the home of every Congressman during the fall recess of 1972, the NRRA extended the privilege to children, appropriately enough on July 4, 1976.) The few paupers, widows, and mental defectives too poor, timid, or witless to acquire arms were given them by children in Halloween masks thought to have been organised by the Super Snoopers but later exposed as a Chinese Communist agent's front to dispose of surplus Congo munitions.*

When civilian militias could no longer maintain the peace, the standing Army of 10 million men was progressively withdrawn from overseas commitments and, in 1995, from Hawaii and Alaska as well. By 1996, guerrilla warfare had spread from the cities to mountain and rural areas. Private armies directed by Ph.D. criminals, retired generals, Black Powerites, Birchites, Mexican irridentists, and other extremists then controlled the Deep South, Southern California, Las Vegas, Empire Ranch, Morningside Heights, Harlem, Martha's Vineyard, and numerous other enclaves. In 1997, while the Army was occupied suppressing riots, the Navy putting out fires at thirteen major ports, and the Air Force reactivating missiles disabled by pacifist saboteurs spearheaded by 500 graduate students in electrical engineering aided by Russian intelligence, Russia occupied Alaska, Japan the Hawaiian Islands, Ireland Boston, Mexico Southwest Texas, and Puerto Rico Manhattan without a shot being fired. Vermont, New Hampshire, Maine, Cape Cod, and adjoining islands declared themselves an independent federation under Canadian protection.

TWO YEARS AGO, suicide pills laced with LSD V (known in the trade as *C²aw*, after its Czech synthesiser—"Capek's caper, or the Absolute at Will") were made available on prescription, and subsequently as a bonus offer by the Trip-of-the-Month Club upon receipt of a certified heir's social security number.

C²aw catering to the masses, the deposed SS directors established for the *élite* what has come to be known as SURCEASE,[3] the ultimate inimitable luxurious passage by rocket into the sun. During the five-month journey, every wish is gratified by superlative synchronised manifold-orifice all-point cerebral-sensory equipment manufactured by Albert Des Esseintes (a collateral descendant of Einstein and Huysmans) serviced around the clock by SURCEASE staff. The versatile equipment enables the passenger to spend every moment exactly as he wishes—reading or listening to anything on earth; sleeping and dreaming alone or with whomsoever he may fancy; eating, drinking, and smelling whatsoever he may wish; recapitulating any part of his, or of the human, experience known or recorded in any form. Upon entering the incandescent zone, there resounds the majestic junkie hymn that captures the heroic spirit of the year 2000 as "Gloomy Sunday" caught the wanner mood of an earlier year.

In counterpoint to the throbbing chorus, the baritone sings with mounting joy of the release of the son from the sins of the father until, in a finale surpassing Beethoven's Ninth, the chorus rejoins overpoweringly, "Mother give me the sun! The Sun!"

[3] From the telephonist's "CEASE, Sir" (for the *Celestial Euthanasia and Suicide Eidola*, with murder a lucrative sideline), later adapted in the firm's gold-embossed childskin brochure to *Supremely Uplifting Rocket To Cosmic Elysium And Sunshine Evermore* (Copyright © 2000 by SS).

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MANY HISTORIANS *have sought to explain the change in the nation's moral climate visible in the 1980s, and many factors doubtless contributed to it—simple satiation; the restoration of much of Freud's original doctrine which had been overthrown by psychiatrists whose political liberalism so confounded their professional judgment that they fancied man was a piece of clay moulded neither by God nor nature nor history, but by parents and society (and, of course, that they could serve as sculptors); the celebrated campaign of the clergy which, for once, was so sensible and realistic that they were soon joined by prominent atheists, anarchists, businessmen, and scientists; and the fortuitous eruption of a drug-resistant venereal disease whose virulence was proportionate to the degree of promiscuity (Hollywood, Haight-Ashbury, the Mafia, much of the Eastern intelligentsia, the Jet Set, and Vassar were decimated; surprisingly many AFDC mothers remained healthy as lambs and others, as ewes; and, all told, the disease was a sociologist's delight).*

However, it now appears that the trend was initiated by the same man who had contributed so much to the morality (or immorality) of the 1960s—Playboy *publisher Hugh Hefner. For reasons honestly stated in his diary (which cannot be disclosed until 2088), during his last years Hefner underwent a conversion similar to Tolstoy's and sought with desperate earnestness, if not entire success, to renounce sex. At a critical moment in his struggle, a drunken and embittered editor substituted the photo of a luscious naked baby for a luscious naked babe on the* Playboy *cover. He was, of course, promptly fired and most of the issue was successfully recalled; but in the few cities where distribution could not be stopped, the magazine sold out immediately. The message was not lost to Hefner. The opportunity again arising, as it had in the 1950s, to merge his moral and business instincts, he recast the magazine (re-titled* Chivalry*) substituting themes of innocence for those of sophistication, delicacy for grossness, and real moral and emotional problems of the whole character for the daydreams of one organ. The formula proved so successful that other publications, and the communication and entertainment media in general, gradually followed suit. Before anyone knew what was happening, the tide of pornography had retreated from Main Street to the docks and from the best-seller list to the small pulp edition. Nudity, sadism, violence, and vulgarity were replaced by a romantic humanism, and today a genuine classicism is emerging: in music, painting, fiction, and poetry, cacophony has yielded to harmony and modern art to real art.*

WITH THE ECONOMIES obtained by the reduction of style changes, industry now maintains a fuller inventory of parts, and stores offer a greater variety of choice at all seasons. As status competition hinges on the age and durability of clothes, houses, trees, marriages, and jobs, there has been a notable decline in divorce and in residential mobility, balanced by an increase in vacation travel and the development of several institutionalised forms for conducting affairs with the willing consent of uninjured spouses. (As Kalven predicted, rooms in which privacy can be secured are indeed now rented by the hour in major cities. What he neglected to note is that this has been true for untold centuries.)[4]

As the suburbs aged, government policy encouraged the construction there of housing for the aged and the relatively poor (dire poverty having long since been eliminated, like smallpox). Better work and recreation facilities were provided when traffic jams made it impossible to commute to work in the central cities; and so the once sterile plots of middle-class housing turned into normal communities.

GUNS HAVE LONG BEEN OUTLAWED *and even the police carry only a beam that disables but does not kill; an educated, esteemed, and humane force, the police now attract the kind of youth who once went into hospital work or the Peace Corps. But the main credit for the dramatic reduction in crime belongs to the Tan Man movement (spawned by the Urban Coalition) and its central city affiliate, the Brown Town, which triumphed over Black Power fanatics by restoring such tranquillity to the city that a mass influx of the middle classes developed, business flourished, and local government could readily furnish the services needed to make city life rewarding and pleasant.*

After the doctrine of parental responsibility for child behaviour was discarded as psychologically and morally unsound as well as futile in practice and wrong in fact, it was superseded by the notion that each person—child or adult—was responsible for his own actions. Children's courts were set up in every neighbourhood to discipline child vandals and delinquents, often sentencing them to various forms of useful labour and ensuring that their punishment was

[4] "It may be a final ironic commentary on how bad things have become by 2000 when someone will make a fortune merely by providing, on a monthly, weekly, daily, or even hourly basis, a room of one's own" (Harry Kalven, Jr., "The Problems of Privacy in the Year 2000," *Daedalus*, Summer 1967, p. 882). The mercenary landlords of certain city houses refuse to rent rooms for *more* than an hour.

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prompt and commensurate with their offence. The courts have been so successful that some parents (recognising the consequences of their indulgence, but unable to change their ways) have turned over to them more serious delinquencies committed within their homes.

Telephones and doorbells have simple ON-OFF switches and all houses have been encased in a transparent plastic film which prevents electronic eavesdropping, softens outside noises, and reduces the cost of both exterior maintenance and interior heating. Since 1990, offonotomies, performed routinely at birth, enable hearing itself to be turned off or on by a single grating of the teeth. Developed by a surgeon whose childhood had been spent next to the Third Avenue El and adopted initially by pneumatic drill operators, jazz bandsmen, and soldiers in the tank and artillery corps, the operation was later recognised by clinical psychologists and marriage counsellors as the ultimate defence of sanity in a world gone, if not entirely mad, then very noisy.

AFTER THE MANAGING EDITOR got a hernia lifting four copies of the Sunday edition, the *New York Times* adopted the format of the old London *Times*, with small advertisements on the front page and the Sunday issue restricted to 16 pages. The loss of advertising revenue was made up by savings in production and distribution, and by subsidies from the U.S. Forest Service. The year that the new format was introduced, the *Times* received special commendations from the American Library and the American Historical Associations. Resources for the Future calculated that, as a result, at least $301.3 million was saved during the next decade in the construction, enlargement and equipment of libraries; postal, indexing, messenger, and refuse removal costs (making full allowance for the re-use of newspaper and its value as insulation and land fill); the cost of erosion control; and the value of water retained by the world's forests—not counting the vast economic value of the time saved at every stage in the process of collecting, writing, publishing, reading, and regurgitating information.

FOLLOWING *the* Times' *lead, the Association of University Professors and the American Council on Education issued a joint resolution condemning all doctoral dissertations over 50 pages, and the government and the Carnegie Corporation adopted a uniform clause in research grants prohibiting the publication of transcripts or verbal remarks in any form, and penalising grantees for publishing when they had nothing new to say. The rule-of-thumb penalty was $1 per unnecessary word, half of the grant being withheld pending receipt of the final report. A magical reduction in the volume of publication ensued, ending all talk of the "information explosion"; so spare did writing become, wits spoke instead of the "information implosion."*

SO WELL EDUCATED and intellectually demanding is the populace (95% of adults have college degrees) that only two TV channels remain, which are standard equipment in every home. One is reserved for news and live sports, and the other for transcriptions of legislative sessions and other political events. Entertainment, instruction, music, drama, and so on is drawn from a virtually limitless tape catalogue housed in the National Library of Movement and Sound that can be searched and displayed by a simple electronic console and panel. So varied is popular taste and so vast the holdings of the Library that rarely do more than 1,000 of the nation's 300,000,000 consoles (one is usually available for every member of the family) view the same tape on any day.

TO RESTORE SPACE FOR LIVING *in the home and garden, cooperative tool, game, and equipment loan and service centres sprang up from which the latest cameras, projectors, lawn mowers, power saws, trampolines, telescopes, skis, and other relatively expensive but little used articles could be quickly obtained.*

The Office of the Congressional Ombudsman, established in 1977 (the successful presidential candidate had made it a plank on his platform the previous year), has, over the years, helped ordinary people to feel that the government is not simply a device for taxation, regulation, obfuscation, and self-justification but can also show some simple human kindness.

To bring government closer to the people, Congress began meeting outside Washington and federal agencies were dispersed intact to cities throughout the country, leasing their unoccupied Washington offices to private business. It happened that the entire staff of a certain bureau, celebrating the move aboard a cruiseship in the Potomac, drifted out to sea and was never heard from again, nor was their absence noted until two years later, when a political scientist from Syracuse sought to do a case study of the move.

BIOLOGISTS have replaced physicists as the leaders of government science affairs, since their knowledge of human limitations and their sense of ecological balance have proven more useful in establishing sensible policies for a

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large stable population. Victims of their own success as a science whose procedures have become largely routinised and computerised, the status of economists now approximates that of accountants. The "in thing" is a kind of clinical political science, the one true intellectual triumph of the otherwise ill-fated John F. Kennedy School of Government that (for reasons too painful to narrate) unfairly affiliated with MIT in 1980 as the Fairlie School of Politics (which was, in fact, a successful cover for research contracted openly by the CIA from funds covertly supplied by the Office of Economic Opportunity and the Department of Agriculture).

In 1992, a former Negro colonel in military intelligence (who, as a volunteer, had rallied the Tibetans to overthrow Chinese rule and who served as head of the Joint Chiefs of Staff from 1988–92, during which period 50 per cent of enlisted men and 40 per cent of officers in the Armed Forces were Negro) was elected President as a middle-of-the-road Republican after his supporters had (against his wishes) publicised the fact that his Jewish Democratic opponent had been a socialist in high school.

In the year 2000, the body of Martin Luther King was reinterred beneath a simple stone fronting the Lincoln Memorial, carrying the single inscription written by an unknown schoolchild: HE HELPED US ALL REGAIN OUR SELF-RESPECT.

★

IT IS HARD TO IMAGINE, let alone cite convincing examples of, an utterly anarchic society—one in which families and individuals fend solely for themselves without governance from, or concord with, others. The examples that come to mind—the retreat from Caporetto, Hiroshima the moment after doom descended, Washington aflame in 1814 or 1968, London during the Black Death, or Zhivago's Russia torn between Red and White armies—have an unnatural, eerie character as if the normal social processes were set aside during an interregnum in which terrible events are commonplace and unrecorded, the old order has gone but no new order has emerged, and ungovernable, savage forces are at large. For (though he can live for periods, as he dies, alone) man is, as Aristotle observed, basically a social animal. Society gives him a language, an historical time and a social place, a sense of purpose and direction, the political issues and cultural forms, if not the full substance, of his life.

Anarchy may afford a vision of utopia as well as of chaos. However, most past anarchistic utopias have been set in simple surroundings, for if each man is to do as he pleases, he must control the means of his own subsistence, and in our hyper-industrial, urbanised world, anarchy is more apt to signify chaos. In any setting, anarchy suits healthy youth decidedly better than infants, pregnant women, the aged, or the invalided. And the indulgences which the idle youth or the idle rich enjoy can turn readily enough into exactions and impositions.

The anarchistic spirit has been extolled by American businessmen and economists as well as by Godwin and Kropotkin. Clement Attlee once called the Tories "anarchists in pin-striped trousers"; and it is plain that the spirit of anarchy, whether derived from our rural forbears or our robber barons, runs deep in American life. It is a spirit of lawlessness, of distrust and disrespect for government, and of reliance upon free—that is, unrestrained—individual and corporate enterprise. It is also a spirit of violence, which, as one Black Power militant notes, "is as American as cherry pie."

In the year 2000, things will probably not be so different from the year 1969 as we are inclined either to believe or to hope. Doubtless, the Statue of Liberty will still stand in Upper New York Bay, though her hem may be somewhat scorched and her bosom bared, and in all its contradictory impulses of abandon and propriety, cruelty and compassion, lewdness and modesty, avarice and charity, the American character will remain recognisably American.

THE FANCIFUL EPISODES I have sketched are not intended to represent alternative futures so much as alternative directions in which the American people may evolve; and, since a people can harbour at least as many inconsistencies as a man, we may well evolve in both directions at once.

THOUGH a convincing portrait of the mottled American character can hardly be painted in one colour, sceptics and optimists alike have daubed even its blackest and bloodiest features with rose. Thus, H. L. Mencken suggested that "sheer high spirits" precipitated the typical Southern lynching[5]—and he may even be right; but the victim was no less dead when

[5] As cited by Samuel E. Morison (who concurs with Mencken) in *The Oxford History of the American People* (1965), p. 794.

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the mob was cheerful. "Despite our lynchings, gang wars, race riots, and casual military undertakings," Richard Rovere does "not think our people are particularly given to violence.... [If] our popular culture is so hung up on violence and sadism... [this] may have less to do with the need for violence than with the third-rateness of the culture and with the kind of talent that turns out all this awful stuff." Besides, "Ours is a culture largely manufactured for export [a new conception of culture that eluded Franz Boas and T. S. Eliot] and the very worst of it is a smash hit all over the world."[6] *Ergo:* our own people have no special need for violence but the rest of the world's peoples do! My good Brookings colleagues were not inclined to see in the murder of a second Kennedy and the yearly murder of thousands of other men grounds for the indictment of American society levelled by many psychologists, sociologists, and Europeans and entertained by President Johnson in establishing the "National Commission on the Causes and Prevention of Violence."[7] And my good colleagues in the American Academy felt that the cloud which now hangs over our cities will lift after the flood of Southern migrants peaks. And perhaps it will; we pray it will; but the flames that have burned have charred our land black, and the blood that has flowed has stained it red, not rose; and though they may erode, the rains can not bleach this earth.

My colleagues are perceptive: at so tragic and uncertain a time, why are they so optimistic?

In part, I imagine, because most Americans are congenital optimists. It is the reigning national spirit, a kind of Coué-ism infecting intellectuals as well as businessmen: that every day, in most every way, we are getting better. In part because the suggestion that the power of darkness may subdue the power of light is professionally offensive; it is not the function of an intellectual to yield the spirit of reason that goeth upward to the spirit of the beast that goeth downward; unsporting death triumphs in real life, but not in the life of the mind.

In part, perhaps, because, emotional though they may sometimes get in their argumentation, intellectuals are usually more sheltered from violence and bloodshed than ghetto residents, police and military men, farmers, longshoremen, truck drivers, bar-tenders, butchers, and countless other Americans. Spared the frequent sight of blood and brute force (observing crime mainly in newspapers and meat in cellophane parcels), they simply underestimate the extent to which it abounds.

And in part because liberals do not want to give ammunition to the forces of repression; and there is, indeed, a real danger that violence may breed repression which may breed new violence in mindless procession. That is dangerous and unpleasant, but it is neither good democratic politics nor good social science to disregard dangerous and unpleasant facts.

The political rise of the intellectual does not, to my mind, afford as much ground for optimism as some intellectuals have immodestly suggested. If, as Daniel Bell argues, the coming era will be dominated by intellectual institutions as earlier eras were dominated by the institutions and interests of business or agriculture, woe betide us! For reason can cut the bonds holding us together as readily as those holding us in thrall, and the application by each special interest of more knowledge and more reason honed to each special purpose will hardly render our politics less bloody (though, when the scalpel is sharp enough, it may take longer to feel the pain).

Beyond politics lie other socially destructive uses of intellect.

> To be always examining and never deciding [observed Comte] would be regarded as something like madness in private conduct.[8]

Yet what is the intellectual, especially the social scientist and most especially the contemporary American sociologist, but a mind always exam-

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[6] See Richard Rovere, "Reflections: Half Out of Our Tree," *New Yorker*, 28 Oct. 1967, reprinted in the *Congressional Record*, 2 Nov. 1967, p. S15721.

[7] In such questions as the following, which the President put to the commission:

> "Is there something in the environment of American society or the structure of American institutions that causes disrespect for the law, that causes contempt for the rights of others, and incidents of violence? If there is, how can we correct it?
>
> "Has permissiveness toward extreme behavior in our society encouraged an increase in violence?...
>
> "Are the seeds of violence nurtured through the public's air-waves, the screens of neighbourhood theatres, the news media, and other forms of communication from our leaders that reach the family and reach our young?" (*Congressional Record*, 11 June 1968, p. E5246).

[8] Auguste Comte, *The Positive Philosophy* (tr. Harriet Martineau, 1896), vol. II, pp. 153–4. Comte went on to remark: "... social order must ever be incompatible with a perpetual discussion of the foundations of society. Systematic toleration can exist only with regard to opinions which are considered indifferent or doubtful...." And, "... political good sense has adopted, to express the first requisite of all organisation, that fine axiom of the Catholic Church; *in necessary things, unity: in doubtful things, liberty: in all things, charity....*"

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ining, always questioning the necessity of prevailing forms and customs, always seeking to replace the arbitrary inheritance of the past by a more rational order—as if society can be remodelled every year like a department store? A society is sustained by its unexamined principles as a body is sustained by its automatic functions; too much too critical reflection unravels first the fabric of our assumptions and then the remaining thread of action. A government of intellectuals acting like intellectuals would quickly bring the affairs of any nation to a halt. It is probably just as well that so many remain cloistered on campus and in "think tanks" where they can daily shake the nation's foundation without disturbing its routine.

Of course, we must expect intellectuals to be at least as vigorous as any other group in advancing their own interests; and, as their tools are subtle and their standard of living high, their public exactions will be substantial.

THE NATION STANDS TODAY at a dangerous juncture, beset by an excess of reasonable as well as unreasonable protest, by an excess of murder and hatred, an excess of instant self-gratification; with a dearth of moderation; a dearth of clear, meaningful political alternatives; and a dearth of great and noble men in and out of public life. Great men cannot be manufactured at will, and their number will not grow if they are murdered at will. We have suffered terribly from the fact that a small man can grow large enough to enter history by bringing a greater man down. "You shoot at yourself, America," exclaimed Yevtushenko upon the murder of Robert Kennedy; and indeed our national situation at times resembles that of the French navy whose ships turned their guns upon each other and sank themselves at Toulon in 1942. For the murder of our King and our President there is no solution and no atonement. But there are a number of issues important to the nation's internal stability about which something can be done. Among these are:

First, the issue of the Negro.

"The news of King's death has stunned us. What can happen now? . . . I can imagine no greater disaster for America," my wife wrote from London, and surely a great many shared that reaction. Racism, the instinctive feeling that a Negro man is first a Negro and not a man like other men, has been the primal American sin. When and how will it be expiated? When will children of colour be given back the native charter of humanity that white men take from at birth? When and how this question will be answered will determine the nature of American society in the year 2000 and, indeed, if there will then be a society that we would want to acknowledge as recognisably American. For if the summer of 1967 and the spring of 1968 have taught us anything at all (and the seeming incapacity of many students to learn is evidently shared by many congressmen and their constituents) it is that, blinded and in chains like Samson the Negro can bring down the American temple.

The question of the Negro can no longer be delegated to police and welfare departments, for it is a central question of all government. It can no longer be delegated to social workers and sociologists, for it is a question central to all who wish to understand our society and to preserve that large part of it which is worth preserving. It is even possible that the solution which will once again bind up the nation's wounds will come not from any accurate analysis of a problem that has too many irrational features to yield simply to reason, but from paying enough attention to the problem. As Willy Loman's wife says in *The Death of a Salesman*, "Attention must be paid." And if some of the attention that the nation paid to Martin Luther King upon his death is given to his cause while we live, it may just happen that one day we will all be truly free at last.

A SECOND ISSUE warranting attention is the larger significance of standards of public deportment and public amenities, the quality of the nation's façade—the refuse and filth on the sidewalks and in public toilets, the slag heaps and car dumps by the roadside, the soot in the air and offal in the streams, the vandalism in cemeteries and the glass in the streets. Is there a relation between the character of public amenities and of public decorum? Between raucous commercialism and raucous behaviour? Between the consumption of alcohol, dope, and pornography and the degree of confidence and self-confidence in our moral standards? Between licence and violence in art and in life?

A bad façade does not necessarily go with a bad character or a good façade with a good one. (Dorian Gray was handsome and dissolute; in Scandinavia, cleanliness and madness seem as closely allied as are dirt and madness in the U.S.) Nor will everyone agree on what are good and bad amenities and conduct. But the appearance of too many public places is offensive; far too little money and effort is spent on maintaining them; and by the year 2000 the vast gulf that yawns between the comforts of suburban homes and the discomforts of most central cities must be bridged if the social cleavages they betoken are also to be bridged.

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We cannot be sure. The destructive forces in the higher as well as lower reaches of this society are so strong that excessive optimism is a form of folly. But it is just possible that if our cities are humanised they will not be burned down.

THEN THERE IS THE NEGLECTED ISSUE of voluntary self-restraint, and of legal restraints on those who are unrestrained, in public. Where and when is, and is not, freedom of conduct and expression desirable and permissible? When does it contribute to individual health and social stability, and when to individual and social degeneracy and destructiveness? The standard liberal doctrine that restraint is dangerous both politically and psychologically, while uninhibited freedom of expression is beneficial is too simple to be convincing or to meet the practical exigencies of ordering peacefully the affairs of a tumultuous and increasingly mobile and crowded people. Mobility implies a lack of knowledge about or responsibility for communities encountered en route, while crowding means that privacy and quiet will become increasingly difficult and expensive to come by and, correspondingly, that the conduct of an individual or firm can impinge on more and more persons in public places (and also, of course, in the home *via* truly national communication media).

In this situation, existing community standards and laws will require continuing adaptation to ensure that they perpetuate not a noble ideology of British lords, French philosophers, American colonists, or Viennese psycho-analysts but the equally noble ideology that will be needed to sustain a huge, motley democratic society in the year 2000. Opinion will differ about what these community standards should be. In my opinion, more and not less restraint will be called for in public situations to which the entire community may normally be exposed. Public defecation, pornography, and sadism, and loud and obtrusive displays that assault the mind should then be proscribed as physical assault is today.

Plainly, this type of restraint is best achieved by voluntary compliance which is, in fact, the only way by which it can be effective, since the law is best enforced when it is least invoked. Some of the most exacting restraints upon private property and personal conduct are those which are freely assumed in buying certain homes or joining certain clubs. The purpose of public restraint is not to impose middle-class standards upon the poor or puritanism upon hedonists but to enable all members of an aggressively self-serving society to walk together in peace. To protect the values of individual groups from enforced conformity to the larger consensus, a diversified moral ecology should be encouraged. Restraint is required in the central city if a man is not to be deafened, a woman molested, a child corrupted, and the general image of society debased to its loudest and most vulgar denominators. But elsewhere in the metropolis and nation, in defined zones entered freely and inhabited by those who know what they will encounter, inversion and perversion could flourish; dope could be smoked; nudists, polygamists, and bums could disport themselves.

We might thus also tolerate a larger degree of economic and political diversity. If a TVA can now function and cooperative stores coexist with capitalist, why not, in the year 2000, socialism in Wisconsin, Black Power in Mississippi and the District of Columbia (with the federal government enjoying extraterritorial rights like the U.N. in New York), an Indian-Eskimo coalition governing Alaska, and Ronald Reagan, Jr., still governing California?

THE LAST ISSUE that may be posed involves the character of our political and economic institutions as well as of our personal lives—the lives of the poor as well as the well-to-do, of intellectuals as well as illiterates. It is: how can we achieve a better balance between the special and the general interest?

The unions in contempt of court and of their fellow men; the businessmen whose wares, warranties, and prices are misrepresented; the civil servants who prefer security to raising awkward questions; the comfortable who would rather buy another car than subsidise their maid's public transportation; the biologists who oppose the licensing of animal experimentation and the riflemen who oppose the licensing of firearms—these and a thousand comparable groups persistently put their special interest before the general good, or are so blind to the interests of others that they think them the same as their own.

CAN THE BASIC FAULT lie to any degree with the American philosophy of boundless individual opportunity which can lead, in due course, to boundless expectations and demands? Is a philosophy of endless frontiers and resources suited to a world whose boundaries and resources are limited? Is it really essential to human happiness that the individual's right to acquire and bequeath wealth remain unlimited? (Would, for example, a $100,000 limit on annual income, and a $1 million limit on individual wealth really shatter the shell of the commonwealth?) When parkland and coastland are limited, should vast stretches remain private

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in perpetuity? When the nation's minerals are limited, should there be no limit to the individual's right to exhaust them?

Sooner or later—if not by the year 2000, then by 2100 or 3000—such questions will have to be answered differently. Hopefully, Americans (who will all have the same beautiful tan complexion) will then have come to live in fuller harmony with themselves and with nature. Death will be acknowledged more openly and inflicted less often. Technology will be more subdued and humanity more exalted. That unimaginable new America will reflect sadly on the epitaph of the old America:

In the nation that is not
Nothing stands that stood before;
There revenges are forgot,
And the hater hates no more

Gallic Puzzle

whether or not
there had been a victim
was unimportant to the detection

what counted
was the shining day
the beach, the white sheets on the cot

(stained with a faint imprint)

the hot stones
the aroma of chemical soda
rope espadrilles

a torn flower lying on the sand

oranges
in the now-empty room
provided the final clue

a sack of objects
to be transmuted magically
into the shape of a book

between whose pages was pressed
a Japanese flower
of character

(dry and unmentioned)

that through the black type
and the pure white paper
the crime is solved

Lyman Andrews

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Black Culture & White America

By Marcus Cunliffe

"Black Power, black nationalism, a black society—whatever meaning these terms will come to have for the whole of American society in the years ahead, the curricular idea of Black Studies will become the principal vehicle by which black students will press their claim for a 'black educational renaissance' in colleges and universities throughout the nation."

JOHN H. BUNZEL, *Black Studies at San Francisco State*

"By the time this book appears, I will be even blacker."

LEROI JONES, *Home: Social Essays*

"BLACK CULTURE" is one of those resonant expressions of our time—"Third World" is another—that contain both a menace and a promise. The stuff of newspaper headlines, they also possess gravity and antiquity. Their importance is at once immediate and profound. "Black culture" includes the emphasis on the *different* nature of black life and history in the United States, the ways in which the idea of difference has been manifested; and—more particularly—the argument within colleges and universities as to how "black studies" should be accommodated. This last aspect came close to me, since I am an academic and an Americanist, acquainted with some of the places where the arguing has gone on, and with scholars and writers who have, actively or passively, become involved.

Yet in reviewing the material, so abundant and so engrossing. I began to feel that the subject was somehow ungraspable, like the coin lying at the bottom of a bowl of water in an exhibition of popular science. The coin is yours if you can pick it up. But an electric current has been passed through the water; it leaps up your arm and paralyses you as soon as you immerse your fingers.

Among the many troubles in the black-white situation, I also felt, was sheer wordage. Despite the ungraspability of the topic, everybody was saying his piece. Every spokesman was indulging in spokesmanship, every apologist in apologias, every militant in militance. The effect of such a volume of rhetoric is curiously benumbing. Visually, one feels the same strain: white facial muscles ache with nervous smiling, black ones with intimidating scowls. Even the most intelligent and the most honourable become trapped in slogans, incantations, recriminations. Not only is there a wearisome repetitiveness in the extremes of white breast-beating and black chest-thumping: the two positions close off the possibility of further enlightenment, or improvement. Some whites, hangdog with guilt and awed by the dual challenge of blackness and revolutionism, imply that they are disqualified from offering comment—at least any comment that could be construed as critical. Take for instance a review by Richard Gilman of Eldridge Cleaver's *Soul on Ice*. Cleaver's memoir, or Malcolm X's autobiography, are (Gilman suggests) "unassimilable for those of us who aren't black.... Negro suffering is not of the same kind as ours." We merely caused it, and are therefore either unaware of it, or else sadistically pleased with our work. So Cleaver's writing "remains in some profound sense not subject to correction or emendation or, most centrally, approval or rejection by those of us who are not black."[1] Even if we thought we understood, we would have no right to discuss such prose of the barricades according to the parlour-conventions of literary criticism. So the only way open to the abject white, who fancies himself not quite beyond redemption, is endless inculpation and the nurturing of a lowly hope that he may in time acquire a little "soul." He can never be a

[1] "White Standards and Negro Writing," *New Republic*, 9 March 1968.

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blood brother: but perhaps he may one day be adopted into associate membership.

At the opposite extreme are the miscellaneous choruses of militant negritude. *Item*, Dr. Nathan Hare, formerly of San Francisco State College:

> Black today is revolutionary and nationalistic. A black-studies programme which is not revolutionary and nationalistic is . . . quite profoundly irrelevant. . . . The expressive phase of the black-studies programme is designed to regenerate the mortified ego of the black child. For instance, a proud black history can restore . . . a sense of pastness, of collective destiny, as a springboard to the quest for a new collective future. . . . Our cries for more black professors and black students have packed white colleges more in two years than decades of whimpering for "integration" ever did.

Item, a list of demands presented to Smith College (Massachusetts) by the Black Students' Alliance in March 1969, prefaced with a quotation from the "Platform of the Black Student Unions":

> We want an education for our people that exposes the true nature of this decadent American society. We want an education that teaches us about our true history and role in the present-day society. We believe in an educational system that will give our people a knowledge of self.

Item, a talk given at a Greenwich Village Methodist church, to a largely hippie audience, by a Black Panther:

> You can walk-in or sing-in all you want, but power comes from the barrel of a gun. . . . Violence is as American as cherry pie. You put a .38 on your hip and you get respect. (*N.Y. Times*, 26 May 1969.)

News photographs of young black militants, in Guevara poses, horrify many Americans, yet thrill others. The same tableau (say, of black Cornell students emerging from Willard Straight Hall like a guerrilla group, all guns and bandoliers) that signifies chaos to many, seems to others a vignette as formally right as a Delacroix painting, or the World War II shot of Marines raising the flag on Iwo Jima. The distance could hardly be greater.

[2] There are signs, however, that *black* may be replaced by *non-white*, in deference to the Puerto Ricans, Mexicans and American Indians who likewise are outside WASP society. This semantic shift is most obviously germane to New York City, with its big Puerto Rican community.

The Scenario

THE WHOLE BUSINESS is too confusedly serious not to be laughable. Or at least it may seem so twenty years from now. There is marvellous material for a comic novel that probably cannot yet be written, and which will probably be written by a Negro: *comédie noire*, a mixture of pop art and apocalypse. Scenes and dialogues are overblown, appalling, ludicrous. Some of the actors are smeared with real blood, some with tomato ketchup. Elements of the tragi-farce include double-talk analogous to the feminist crusade. (How dare males ignore the wonderful achievements of females? how dare they assume that women are the same as men? how dare they assume that women are different from men, and therefore to be segregated? Call a woman writer a "writer" *tout court*, and you insult her femininity. Call her a "woman writer" and you insult her professional standing, as if you were calling her a "lady preacher.") The *comédie noire* incorporates the current vogue for dreaming of the overthrow of capitalism, and the subordinate slapstick of white-radical endeavours to latch on to contemptuous black-radical campaigns (even at the price of endorsing black anti-Semitism—a stiff price when the whites in question happen to be Jews). It involves the I-told-you-so glee of white segregationists who always knew that blacks were not the same as you-and-me; the jealousy of the white poor who do not feel they are any better off than the "pampered" blacks; and the covert anecdotes among white liberals about black intellectuals, with swollen egos, elevated far beyond their merits. It embraces the up-to-the-minute commercial enthusiasm of admen, publishers, and TV producers to "tell it like it is" and denounce Whitey with a competitive zeal that black militants may well mistake for corrupt cynicism. It entails frantic reversals, rewriting of textbooks, revisions on a scale worthy of the Soviet Encyclopaedia.

Reformers once campaigned to have the word *negro* spelt *Negro*. Now, the in-word is *black*: *Negro* is reserved for those who have behaved like Uncle Toms, adjusting themselves to the white man's world.[2] In the canon of black heroes, the militants are in—the leaders of bygone insurrections, such as Gabriel Prosser, Denmark Vesey and Nat Turner; Frederick Douglass the abolitionist; Marcus Garvey, conceiver of the back-to-Africa movement of the 1920s; and of course Malcolm X, together with

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the Algerian prophet of third-world revolution, Frantz Fanon.[3] The record expunges or equivocates over other one-time heroes, notably Booker T. Washington and W. E. B. DuBois.

Also in the scenario are internecine feuds, excommunications for "insufficient blackness" of such famous writers as Ralph Ellison and James Baldwin, and the irritation of the "Negro" majority who resent the claim of the black minority to represent the entire Negro-American people. And there is the great spectre (perhaps chimera) of "Pan-Africanism." The black spokesman often speaks of himself as an Afro-American. Black studies curricula in American colleges stress the "Afro" component, and black students dress the part: *dashikis*, unstraightened hair. Swahili words are in vogue, despite the insistence of some sceptics that Swahili is a bastard language, confined to areas of Africa far removed from the Slave Coast....

In short, the *comédie noire* would amount to a surrealist miscellany of backtalk and doublethink, of people doing the right thing for the wrong reasons, the wrong thing for the right reasons, and the wrong thing for the wrong reasons. The plot-line shifts casually and bewilderingly as in an old screen-comedy, and with the same crazy violence: explosions, crashes, gaol-breaks, interchanges of dream and reality, sequences played backward, chases around the block in which pursued becomes pursuer, corpses or skeletons in every cupboard, solemn citizens reduced to their underwear, thin men inflated with bicycle pumps.

A systematic report would, then, be impossible. Instead I offer notes on sundry aspects of black culture in the white America of the 1960s.

Demands & Responses

THE AIM OF A TYPICAL black-studies curriculum, as it is being argued out on the campuses of the United States, is to introduce a comprehensive programme of courses (or a "major") in Afro-American history, literature, sociology, etc. These are to be taught primarily to black students (who also stake a claim to black living, dining, and other facilities) by black professors. Where the campus happens to be close to a black "ghetto," there is a considerable emphasis on the duty of black students to involve themselves, so as to communicate to their own people their new-gained knowledge, anger, and aspiration. Since a basic proposition is that blacks are fundamentally different from whites, it follows that few white scholars would be acceptable as teachers. This is held true even of professors who have specialised in slavery or in other themes of Afro-American history or sociology. How can the descendants of slaveholders and slave-traders speak to the descendants of slaves? In general, whites are mistrusted; even if they know what they are talking about, their very whiteness offends.[4]

Some of these programmes have been resisted,

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[3] Vital keys to Afro-American militance may be found in Fanon's *Les damnés de la terre* (1961), which has been widely read in translation in the U.S. For instance:

> "When I search for Man in the technique and the style of Europe, I see only a succession of negations of man, and an avalanche of murders.... Two centuries ago, a former European colony decided to catch up with Europe. It succeeded so well that the United States became a monster, in which the taints, the sickness and the inhumanity of Europe have grown to appalling dimensions." (*The Wretched of the Earth*, Penguin, 1967, p. 252.)

But Fanon also said, in an acute essay on national culture (pp. 172–3), that American Negro delegates at the African Cultural Congress of 1956 gradually realised

> "that the essential problems confronting them were not the same as those that confronted the African Negroes. The Negroes of Chicago only resemble the Nigerians or the Tanganyikans in so far as they were all defined in relation to the whites."

[4] See the comments of James Turner, a rising young black-studies academic, on plans for Cornell University's Afro-American centre:

> "Certainly there are white men like Herbert Aptheker... who might be invited to lecture or do research at the centre. Other white scholars like the British writer Basil Davidson or George Shepperson, who teaches African history at the University of Edinburgh, would also be invited in. But there are some whites, like historians Kenneth Stampp, Stanley Elkins and C. Vann Woodward, with whose work we would find question." Ernest Dunbar, "The Black Studies Thing," *New York Times Magazine*, 6 April 1969, p. 70.

Aptheker, a veteran Marxist, is the author of *American Negro Slave Revolts* (1943). Well-known books by the non-placet Americans include *The Peculiar Institution*, a history of slavery by Kenneth Stampp (1956), Stanley Elkins' *Slavery: A Problem in American Institutional and Intellectual Life* (1959), and C. Vann Woodward's *The Strange Career of Jim Crow: A Brief Account of Segregation* (1955).

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overtly or covertly. White scholars could hardly be expected to agree to being shut out from their own fields. The titles of some proposed courses (*e.g.*, "Black Psychology," "The Painting of Blackness," "The Geography of Blackness") have provoked amusement and exasperation. Nevertheless, it could be asserted that the recognition of black culture has in recent years been rapid and fairly widespread. Whites who regard themselves as men of goodwill admit that until the 1960s the nation's record on Negro higher education has been dismal. At present, in a country whose blacks form 11% of the population, only 4% of the college population (300,000 out of 6,700,000) is black—half of these in entirely or predominantly Negro colleges. But some whites feel that the deficiency ought not to be laid entirely at the doors of the WASP America. They point to the achievement of three other ethnic minorities—the Chinese, the Japanese, and the Jews—all of which have experienced severe discrimination and two of which are markedly "un-American" in appearance and life-styles. Yet they send more than half of their children to college. The implication is that if the desire for college education is strong enough within an ethnic group, they will somehow manage to get it and that without such motivation, schemes to increase enrolment may be futile.

In any case, whites allege that colleges are now falling over themselves to admit more black students. At Cornell University, which has been so much in the news, the luckless President Perkins himself initiated the trend; he was instrumental in raising the black enrolment from 25 to 250, and envisaged an increase to 400 —still small in an institution of 14,000 students, but not negligible.

No reputable college has rejected the notion of black studies. A few, including Stanford (California) and Rutgers (New Jersey) already offer B.A. degrees in Afro-American Studies. In 1968 Berkeley introduced such new courses as "American Racism, Ethnic and Racial Groups," "Sociology of the Black Family," and "Psychological Aspects of Black Identity." Harvard has begun to offer "The Afro-American Experience" ("history and contemporary problems of Negroes in American society, from African backgrounds to present-day movements"). More than twenty campuses will have launched "black" majors by the autumn of 1969, and the number is sure to augment. Even the University of Alabama, not famous for liberality, has begun a course on Afro-American history for its overwhelmingly white student body.[5]

FOR WHATEVER REASONS—some worthy, some hucksterish—there has also been an astonishing spread of new books and reprints on black culture. There is, for instance, Atheneum's *Studies in American Negro Life*, launched in 1958 under the general editorship of August Meier.[6] Scholarly quarterlies and liberal magazines teem with advertisements for the literature of negritude. Hill & Wang, for example, have published a historical survey, *From Plantation to Ghetto*, by August Meier and Elliott M. Rudwick, several volumes by Langston Hughes, and an anthology of *American Negro Poetry* edited by Arna Bontemps. William Morrow announce a series on "black themes"; among the titles are Harold Cruse's *The Crisis of the Negro Intellectual*; *The Speeches of Malcolm X at Harvard*, edited by Archie Epps; two books on black music by LeRoi Jones, and *Home*, a collection of his "social essays."[7] Grove Press, under the heading THE BLACK EXPERIENCE, advertise more books by LeRoi Jones, *The Wretched of the Earth* and other works by Frantz Fanon, and items such as Julius Lester's *Look Out, Whitey! Black Power's Gon' Get Your Mama!* ("A magnificent example of the new black revolutionary writing that could generate the tidal force to sweep aside all the tired and dead matter on our literary shores."—*New York Times Book Review*.) Basic Books have brought out a substantial anthology of *Negro Social and Political Thought, 1850–1920*, edited by Howard Brotz (1966). Another publisher has contributed a

[5] "The Dilemma of Black Studies," *Time*, 2 May 1969; Ward Just, "What is This 'Black Studies' that All the Fuss is About?" *Washington Post*, 17 March 1969.

[6] These paperback volumes include reprints of Alain Locke's *The New Negro* (1925) and James Weldon Johnson's *Black Manhattan* (1930), and biographies of Frederick Douglass and W. E. B. DuBois, together with more specialised reprints of monographs on, *e.g.*, *The Black Worker: The Negro and the Labor Movement*; *The Negro's God as Reflected in His Literature*; *The Negro in Colonial New England*.

[7] Cruse's *Crisis of the Negro Intellectual* is published in England by W. H. Allen (63s.); the Harvard symposium edited by Archie Epps, with the alternative title *Malcolm X and the American Negro Revolution*, is published by Peter Owen (38s.); LeRoi Jones' *Home* is available from MacGibbon & Kee (30s.).

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group of essays on *Images of the Negro in American Literature*.[8]

And so on. In this respect at least, it would seem that the black militant cannot complain of being slighted, though he may complain of being smothered, not to say nauseated.[9]

Television too has sniffed the wind of change. A few months ago the Columbia Broadcasting System (CBS) began an eighteen-week TV series, "Black Heritage." Most of the contributors were black academics and writers, with a tincture of white commentary from approved radicals such as Staughton Lynd. The whole mammoth venture, exemplary in its militance, is to reach still wider markets. In a handsome brochure the publishers Holt, Rinehart & Winston announce the distribution of the entire set of 108 half-hour films, at a price of $15,000, and of a 27-volume paperback library based on the films.

> Various possibilities exist [the publishers add] for the purchase of these materials with federal funds. The elementary and secondary Education Act at the high school level and the Higher Education Act for colleges are only two of the areas you might investigate.

A singular situation, at least for foreign observers. National funds are available for the exposure of national iniquities.

Standards of Academic Freedom

IN WHITE EYES, the disputes that have arisen over black studies programmes have nothing to do with discrimination: they involve issues of academic standards and academic freedom. Thus, black activists argue (on much the same lines, whether they know it or not, as the white sociologist Daniel P. Moynihan) that disadvantaged youngsters—mostly black, but also Puerto Rican, Mexican, Indian and so on—must be given preferential treatment in admissions. Colleges and universities with high academic standards have been reluctant to make such a concession. But they are yielding ground, willingly or otherwise. At Cornell in 1965, aided by a scholarship grant from the Rockefeller Foundation, Perkins began to admit black freshmen whose scholastic record was below par. At New York's City College, a coalition of militant black and Puerto Rican students "persuaded" the administration to operate a new admissions policy. By the autumn of 1970 this would reserve half the freshmen undergraduate places for students from New York high schools many of which are mainly of Negro and Puerto Rican composition. In ghetto districts, the conventional academic requirements would be waived.

On the matter of academic standards and academic freedom there are two main issues:

1. Should colleges yield to pressure (demands, demonstrations, sit-ins) in determining their curricula, on the ground that the militants passionately believe in their own case?
2. Should colleges establish curricula designed largely or wholly by and for the black minority—in other words, consent to establish separatist enclaves within their own communities?

Here the white contention is that academic freedom from external pressure, achieved relatively recently in American history, remains fragile and must be defended. Its enemies, of whatever persuasion, are after all often passionate and invariably convinced of their own rightness. If professors give way to black-power advocates, how can they hope to resist state legislatures or other pressure groups?[10] Some

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[8] Edited by Seymour L. Gross and John E. Hardy, University of Chicago Press, 48s.

[9] "The winner of the third annual Deutsch, Shea & Evans Awards went to Doubleday & Co. for its ad. on Zenith Books. The ad. showed a youth sitting at a desk looking at a comic book behind a textbook. The copy said: 'No wonder George ignores his history. His history book ignores him too.'" (*N.Y. Times*, 7 May 1969.)

[10] The columnist James A. Wechsler (*New York Post*, 22 April 1969) indicates in satirical form what might happen if radical protest-techniques were employed for other ends:

> "The aggressive emergence of the John Birch Society campus underground came suddenly... at Siwash University on May 17, 1969. At 8 a.m. that day about 140 members of the group, many attired in their ROTC uniforms and carrying rifles issued to them during training hours, invaded the university's administration building.... When the press and TV arrived, a neatly mimeographed statement... was handed out listing the demands of the intruders. Its major points were:
>
> —Immediate institution of compulsory ROTC....
>
> —Creation of a university-wide Decency Committee—with majority representation for Birchers—to screen all books used in English courses.
>
> —Elimination of Marxist works from the economics curriculum....
>
> —Denial of university facilities to any visiting speaker who has criticised the Viet Nam war.
>
> —Drafting of a new admission policy to ensure that 20 per cent of the freshman class be composed of athletic letter-winners in high school, of whom only 3 per cent would be Negroes...."

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remorseful or radical white academics are disposed to accept the black indictment of the entire white culture as being "racist, capitalistic, decadent," etc. Others cling to the conviction that life is not, so to speak, such a black-and-white affair: at least some of the values of academe are or ought to be universal in validity and application.

The problem of black separatism is equally perplexing. White colleges and universities are now eager to recruit black faculty, and to introduce black studies in various shapes. The sticking-point for some comes with the militants' insistence that certain courses should be open *only* to black students, and be taught *only* by black professors. Why should, how can, non-black students be excluded? Why should, how can, skin-colour be made a criterion of suitability to teach? A faculty report of the University of Wisconsin recommended a few months ago that there should be a new Department of Afro-American Studies, and that its steering committee should consist of seven faculty members (preferably with "a knowledge and understanding of the black community and of the area of Afro-American Studies") and two students. A minority report, signed among others by E. David Cronon (the author of the standard biography of the Negro leader Marcus Garvey), raised a number of objections, for instance:

> Black student spokesmen are explicit in their view that they want a Department because they would be able thereby to control the subject matter of "black studies. . . ." [We] are greatly troubled by the repeated insistence on "the black perspective" as a criterion for appointment or teaching in such a department. . . . We doubt that an infant Department of Afro-American Studies could effectively resist pressures on behalf of a particular orthodoxy from a militant minority.

As Professor Cronon and his dissenting colleagues add, it is hard to plan coherent black studies programmes when the situation is so fluid. Harold Cruse's fascinating *Crisis of the Negro Intellectual* reveals how shifting and how acrimonious is the world of James Baldwin, LeRoi Jones, and other black literati. Some have only lately adopted militance: might they not change their minds once more? Moreover, there is an escalatory atmosphere. A demand for a separate department may be superseded almost overnight by some different (and, in the present climate, more ambitious) scheme: a black college, say, or a new "Third World" grouping. Academics maintain that there is a vital distinction between timidity or obstructionism, and a necessary deliberateness (often labelled by impatient critics as "tokenism" or "gradualism"). We may live in the jet age; but though jet aircraft can travel at the speed of sound they take several years to design and build, and cannot operate without complex provisions for crewing and maintenance. The same is held to be true of academic organisation. Thus, there is an acute shortage of black academics qualified to teach Afro-American courses. It would seem unfair to raid such black institutions as Howard and Tuskegee in search of faculty. Other candidates strike administrators as more demagogic than scholarly: the one skill is rarely accompanied by the other, and an agitator burdened with responsibility often becomes a curiously dull fellow.

Professorial uneasiness is aggravated by an apparent basic ambiguity in the black studies approach—as indeed in the attitudes of white student-radicalism. The black demand, that is, appears simultaneously to repudiate the whole rationale of white society, *and* to ask for betterment, inclusion, representation, fair shares within the fortress of white America. But if American society is truly reactionary and vicious beyond redemption, why should it be foolish enough to expose its colleges to revolutionism? And how can black militants, inevitably outnumbered on all those white campuses, avoid being corrupted, brainwashed, "bought out" by the white system? Why not work within existing Negro colleges, or press for new separate black establishments?[11]

A FURTHER SOURCE of white alarm is the hostility directed by black militants against the Jews. Some of this has no doubt been exaggerated. But evidence exists of swaggering, blatant anti-Semitism, especially conspicuous among one or two of the candidates for Afro-American teaching jobs. One can see reasons for it: anger against white exploitation in Harlem, where a

[11] W. H. Ferry, a white sympathiser, has advocated the creation of a black college within the University of California. His position seems logical. In this upside-down atmosphere of disputation, however, one can see that his proposal might appeal to white segregationists, only too happy to leave black militants to fight one another instead of disturbing white campuses.

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high proportion of businesses have been owned or managed by Jews; emotional affiliation with the Muslim world ("The Arabs must send us guns," cries LeRoi Jones in his book *Home*, "or we will accuse them of having sold us into slavery!"); the need to dissociate blacks from the white group apparently closest to themselves in America (a hitherto unpopular and now successful minority, with a high proportion of liberal intellectuals); the need to dispose of the "six million dead" argument, because if it were accepted the black sense of unique persecution would lose some of its force. There is nevertheless a painful irony for Jews, who have long sought to combat discrimination in the United States, in hearing the old anti-Semitic jibes voiced by young blacks.[12] Take, for instance, a recent *Teacher's Guide to American Negro History* (1968), conceived in the most respectable current mode:

> Few Americans are aware that Negroes explored the West with Lewis and Clark or Fremont; that a Negro named Matt Henson (with the Peary polar expedition of 1909) was among the first men to stand atop the world; that Negroes contributed a thousand patents to America's industrial thrust just a half-century after Emancipation; that a Negro surgeon performed the first successful open-heart operation; and that a Negro, Mme C. J. Walker, was the first American woman to earn a million dollars.

Such filiopietist testimony could well have come from the pages of the Negro magazine *Ebony*. In fact the author, William Loren Katz, is presumably Jewish; his book is copyrighted by the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith. The American Jewish liberal and his gentile counterpart have begun to wonder whether *anything* they do can find favour with blacks. It was they who carefully instructed their children in the etiquette of ethnicism: *Negro* with a *N*, words like *black* and *blacks* to be avoided. But now they must reverse their teaching: *black* is beautiful, *Negro* is not nice, the whites are all a bad lot, including (especially) the Jews.

Negro versus Black

IT IS HARD also for whites not to believe that certain aspects of black militance are part of the so-called "generation conflict" that preoccupies the whole dis-United States. Indeed, they can call upon non-white testimony—that of the older, "Negro" generation which is by no means happy with most of the manifestations of "black" culture. These are the middle-aged or elderly leaders of the NAACP, the Urban League and other organisations which for half a century pioneered the movement for civil and economic rights, until they were ousted a few years ago by the black nationalists. Bayard Rustin, director of the A. Philip Randolph Institute, puts his faith in the lifelong efforts of Mr. Randolph.

> What in hell [Rustin asks] are soul courses worth in the real world? . . . Everyone knows that education for the Negro is inferior. Bring them into the university with the understanding that they must have remedial work. . . . The easy way out is to let them have black courses and their own dormitories and give them degrees. In the

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[12] See the full-page advertisement in the *New York Times* (31 January 1969), inserted by the American Jewish Congress:

> "There has always been a special affinity between the black man and the Jew. It developed out of a common history of slavery and persecution. . . . It grew in a common striving for freedom and dignity; a common cry whose theme was 'Let my People Go'; even a common vocabulary—the Jewish quarter of Venice 600 years ago was known by the same word that describes Harlem and Bedford-Stuyvesant today: ghetto.
>
> "And so it was natural that Jews were among the first Americans to join the struggle for racial justice. In 1909, one of the small group that launched the NAACP (National Association for the Advancement of Colored People) was Rabbi Stephen Wise. In the years since, Jews have played a role far beyond their numbers in the struggle for racial justice—in the courts and legislatures, on picket lines and marches in the great cities of the North and the backwater villages of the Deep South."

Compare this with the chapter on "Negroes and Jews" in Cruse's *Crisis of the Negro Intellectual*, which conveys the mingled admiration, chagrin and distrust of the black American. *E.g.* (p. 487):

> "There are far too many Jews from Jewish organisations into whose privy councils Negroes are not admitted, who nevertheless are involved in every civil rights and American-African organisation, creating policy and otherwise analysing the Negro from all possible angles. No matter what motivates such activity, the Negro in America will never achieve any kind of equality until more Negro intellectuals are equipped . . . to move into control and guidance of every branch of the Negro Movements."

See also *Negro-Jewish Relations in the United States* (Citadel Press, New York, 1966), and Nathan Glazer, "Blacks, Jews and the Intellectuals," *Commentary* (April 1969).

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long run, no one gives a damn if you had a course in the black soul.[13]

Dr. Kenneth B. Clark, a prominent Negro psychologist, resigned as a trustee of Antioch College (Ohio) in protest at its "racially organised and exclusionary" Afro-American Studies Institute. The Federal government had originally questioned the programme as being segregationist, but then thought better of this and ruled that the institute could exclude non-black students (*e.g.*, as not possessing a "relevant" background), so long as it did not bar them because of "race, colour, or creed." Dr. Clark declared:

> To exclude someone of one race—or to admit that it would be appropriate to do so—on the grounds that his background or experience are irrelevant... is precisely what white segregationists have been doing to blacks for centuries. Yet this seems to be the burden of rationalisation at Antioch for a black separatist policy. Yet it is whites who need a black studies programme most of all. The white liberal who concedes black separatism must look to his own reasons, not the least of them perhaps an exquisite relief.

Exasperation with white pusillanimity is also apparent in the complaints directed by Roy Wilkins of the NAACP at the Columbia Broadcasting System. After seeing the first two instalments of the "Black Heritage" series Mr. Wilkins said:

> It is quite clear that "Black Heritage" will not be a history of Afro-Americans, but an interpretation of history from a single point of view: the contemporary left-of-centre black militant minority view, liberally garnished with the thrust for a new *apartheid*.

His fears were confirmed. He wrote subsequently to CBS to protest at the "Black Revolution" emphasis of the series. Four lectures had been devoted, for example, to Marcus Garvey's ephemeral "Back to Africa" movement. The NAACP's 60-year-old record had been slighted and distorted: a record comprising much of "the history of the effort of Negro American citizens to enter fully, without discrimination, into the life of their country. It is not merely a weeping and wailing, leading to the erroneous conclusion that black Americans need to separate off and in some undefined fashion, minister to what they image to be the mystique of their unique travail."

[13] Bayard Rustin, "The Total Vision of A. Philip Randolph," *New Leader*, 14 April 1969; *Paris Herald-Tribune*, 29 April 1969. Rustin develops similar arguments in an interview (*Baltimore Sun*, 2 May 1969): "It is a grievous mistake that there has not been the study of Negro culture and history; but I'm opposed to it as black studies.... To try to separate the black experience from the American experience is ridiculous."

[14] *Black Thunder* was reprinted as a paperback in 1964 (Seven Seas, East Berlin).

The Styron Imbroglio

SOME OF THE STIFLING intricacies of the *comédie noire* are indicated in the controversy over William Styron's *The Confessions of Nat Turner* (1967), which made it impossible to say calmly that Styron's novel is a serious work marred by a certain pretentious vulgarity. Turner was an actual person, a Virginia preacher-slave who organised an insurrection in 1831. His rising collapsed after a bloody beginning, and Turner was hanged. Since the historical evidence is meagre, Styron was obliged to invent a character for Turner.

In some ways the tone of Styron's book resembled that of *Black Thunder* (1935), a novel about Gabriel Prosser's abortive slave rebellion of 1800 written by a Negro, Arna Bontemps.[14] Each took for granted the evil of slavery and the view that any black man of spirit was bound to dream of rebellion. Each weighed the hopeless odds—including the danger of betrayal by other Negroes. The difference between the two novels could largely be accounted for by the difference in their dates of publication (except that Bontemps' hero has a black girl-friend, while Styron's Turner adores and desires a white girl). The shift in public taste led Styron to write more explicitly of sexuality; in this respect his novel, a first-person narrative, was doubly "confessional." He could also draw upon the theories of the historian Stanley Elkins, who suggests that the behaviour of American Negro slaves was analogous to that of latter-day inmates of concentration camps. Deprived of their own culture and of almost every shred of self-respect, they tended to develop an obsequious "Sambo" personality, flattering, fearing, and even venerating their white masters.

Nearly all the white reviewers gave high praise to Styron. He had written a "liberal" novel, depicting Nat Turner as a sensitive, isolated man, tormented by religious and sexual fantasies; and clearly only a man in torment would have staged so desperate a massacre. If the novel had appeared ten years earlier, Negro

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reviewers might have been equally cordial. But in the new climate of opinion black critics were infuriated. Some of their reactions were collected in *William Styron's Nat Turner: Ten Black Writers Respond*.[15] They accused Styron of a sort of psychic larceny. He had robbed blacks of a hero whose significance was not to be debased and denatured according to Styronian formulae. The truth of *their* Turner, historical and mythic, must be rendered in some simpler, grander idiom, as in the words of the anonymous ballad:

You might be rich as cream
And drive you a coach and four horse team;
But you can't keep the world from moving around,
And Nat Turner from the gaining ground.[16]

What matter if he had taken a long time to reach the gaining ground? He must have known that this would be so, with the same madman's sanity as that of John Brown.

The black answer was answered in turn by the white historian Eugene Genovese, author of a brilliantly opinionated book on *The Political Economy of Slavery*.[17] In defending Styron, Genovese asserted that

> the black intelligentsia faces a serious crisis. Its political affinities lie with the black-power movement, which increasingly demands conformity, myth-making, and historical fabrication. . . . The history of every people exhibits glory and shame, heroism and cowardice, wisdom and foolishness, certainty and doubt, and more often than not these antagonistic qualities appear at the same moment and in the same men. The revolutionary task of intellectuals is, accordingly, not to invent myths, but to teach each people its own particular contradictory truths.

In subsequent exchanges Genovese was denounced for "ignorance" and "bias." He reiterated that Styron's "fault" lay in not having produced a propaganda tract full of white devils and black avenging angels. Nat Turner, he insisted, was simply not a figure continuously present in the Negro heritage, even if it had become fashionable to name him in the current black-power litany along with Fanon, Malcolm X, and Eldridge Cleaver. The real wisdom was not in rewriting the past so as to portray every slave as a Toussaint L'Ouverture, or even a Nat Turner, but in seeking to understand why there had been so few rebellions; why they had collapsed so quickly; why Negrophobia had been endemic among blacks as well as whites.

It has been one of those controversies much taken up with displays of credentials and refusals of accreditation. Genovese found it necessary to resist the WASP-identification fastened upon him by black opponents—"a hell of an accusation to level against a man of working-class Italian-American origins and socialist politics." To accept the imputation of WASP-ness would be to concede that radical doctrines lack universality: they would be mere white man's stuff, pale-face economics, honkie revolutionism. To let Nat Turner's followers annex the gaining ground might be to deny oneself any elbow-room, to concede something neither historically nor psychologically acceptable—namely, that blackness is the paramount concern of every man of feeling but that only the black can know how it feels.

Hence few commentators were able to speak reasonably on the Styron issue. Some of the black writers seemed ready, as Genovese said, to fabricate the record. "Telling it like it is" apparently means telling it like it wasn't. In support of his remarks Genovese could have quoted a poem by Sterling A. Brown, "Remembering Nat Turner," whose sadly ironic message is that, a hundred years later, no one in the neighbourhood is properly aware of what happened there:

We had a sign post here with printing on it,
But it rotted in the hole and thar it lay;
And the nigger tenants split the marker for kindling.

On the other hand, there *is* evidence that Negroes remembered Nat Turner.[18] Groups that have become self-consciously proud *do* want heroes without blemish, before whose tomb they can pay their respects. Even today, 170 years after his death, I doubt whether Americans would be indifferent to a description of George Washington in the act of masturbating—a habit attributed by Styron to Nat Turner. In rightly refusing to truckle to the exaggerated demands of black mythology, Genovese appeared to dis-

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[15] Edited by John Henrik Clarke (Beacon Press, 1968, $4.95).

[16] Quoted in Rosey E. Pool, ed., *Ik ben de Nieuwe Neger* (Bert Bakker, The Hague, 1965), p. 72. Other poems quoted later in this article also appear in Dr. Pool's anthology.

[17] *The Political Economy of Slavery: Studies in the Economy and Society of the Slave South* (MacGibbon & Kee, 1966, 45s.).

[18] See, for instance, the sermons and other references mentioned in Benjamin Quarles, *Black Abolitionists* (Oxford University Press, 1969, 58s.).

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play a certain insensitivity. In this kind of dispute the middle ground of moderation virtually disappears.[19]

Facts & Myths

THERE ARE MISSING SPACES in the conventional record. It is salutary for all Americans, of whatever hue, to be reminded of the early street-corner Negro, Crispus Attucks (misrepresented in one 19th-century account as a Nantucket Indian), one of the five dead in the so-called Boston massacre of 1770; and that of the four American sailors taken by force from the *Chesapeake* by *H.M. Leopard* in 1807, three were Negroes; and of figures such as Jim Beckwourth, the Western hunter and Crow Indian warrior—by origin a runaway slave; and of the blackness of Matt Henson, standing with Peary in the Arctic whiteness. It is necessary to restore to visibility the Negro abolitionists and soldiers and cowboys. It is essential that the cumulative weight of slavery and of prejudice should be comprehended. American national history, at least in high-school textbooks, has been too rosily presented as an onward and upward march. I do not think this has been so obvious in college texts, or in scholarly monographs. But if there was a bias it is now being corrected, possibly over-corrected, in the products of New-Leftish or liberal scholarship which minister far more to black than to white self-esteem.

There is no good reason why more and more courses in black studies should not be introduced —as they inevitably will be. As for their content, most American institutions of higher learning are in no position to pretend that such courses would lower the academic tone. Big institutions tend to offer an extraordinary mishmash, ranging from the esoteric to the crassly vocational. Area studies programmes (Asian Studies, Russian Studies, American Studies) are already well established. If black literature has only found its full voice in the middle third of the 20th century, American colleges are no strangers to curricular modernity.

There are, however, drawbacks. Courses designed to explore the black historical achievement must often rest upon sadly thin material. The labourers of a nation lack the means to develop a glittering culture. Scholarship will furnish the names of isolated insurgents, the forerunners of Malcolm X and Cleaver; of an occasional Muslim slave; of a few eloquent protesters—David Walker, Frederick Douglass. But in general, except for music, the tale is inevitably one of silence, the silence of the poor and unlettered, the men who for two-and-a-half centuries left almost no records except the records kept of them, as chattels, given names like so many dogs or horses. A terrible fact, yes, but not a new fact and not a fact on which to build a vast new apparatus of study. Surely much of the apparatus is there already, thanks to such scholars as John Hope Franklin (who happens to be black) and Stampp and Woodward (who happen to be white).

Nor are the words of those Negroes who could speak likely in general to minister to black pride. Except for a minority of firebrands, most of them were necessarily absorbed into the dominant culture. If they were writers, they wrote like white men: no other possibility existed. Rutgers University provides two significantly labelled courses: *Negro Writers to 1950*, and *Black Writers since 1950*. The second has plenty to go upon. The first is liable to run into difficulties. There is little to chew on before the 1920s, and even with the Harlem "Renaissance" of that decade there are embarrassments, not because the writers of the inter-war years (Countee Cullen, Langston Hughes, Jean Toomer, etc.) are bad but because they are merely good, not prodigious; and because they are only intermittently "black" even when they deal with "black" themes.[20] To focus upon negritude is to be compelled to excise much of the actual record, and to create puzzles in much of what is left. It means dodging the crucial questions in the careers of, say, Booker T. Washington and W. E. B. DuBois. It means ignoring that, just as millions of American whites are part-Negro, so many American Negroes (Fred-

[19] Genovese's critique of *William Styron's Nat Turner* appeared in the *New York Review of Books* (12 September 1968). A further exchange was printed in the same periodical (7 November); and see some interesting remarks on historical falsification, also by Genovese, in *NYRB* (26 September 1968), in the course of a review of Staughton Lynd's *Intellectual Origins of American Radicalism*. There is a useful summary of the controversy in "William Styron vs. the Black Intellectuals," by Harvard Sitkolt and Michael Wreszin in *Midstream: A Monthly Jewish Review* (November 1968). For an exceptionally intelligent discussion, less concerned to exonerate Styron, see Jervis Anderson, "Styron and His Black Critics," *Dissent* (March–April 1969).

[20] See the scathing comments in LeRoi Jones' *Home* on various anthologies of Negro writing compiled by Arna Bontemps and others.

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erick Douglass, DuBois, Malcolm X, Adam Clayton Powell) are not "black" but of mixed descent. (When Douglass was criticised for making a second marriage with a white woman, he replied that this proved his impartiality: his first wife was "the colour of my mother, and the second, the colour of my father.")

And more conventional filiopietism has its snares. To dwell upon the "success" of a host of bygone black Americans is to raise the query of why their successes were not consolidated. What happened to that million dollars amassed by Mme Walker? Why did Marcus Garvey's schemes go wrong? If Negro literature began to flower half-a-century ago, why wait for a white novelist to tackle Nat Turner? There are plenty of sharp answers to such questions, but they are not always consistent. Indignation and pride are apt to cancel one another out.

THE PRESENT PREOCCUPATION with the African heritage is understandable. Apart from the new stimulus of the black nations of Africa, the Negro imagination has always polarised itself between white America and black Africa. But the one represented immediate reality, the other a remote though sometimes splendid dream. In the refrain of a celebrated poem of Countee Cullen's,

> *One three centuries removed*
> *From the scenes his fathers loved*
> *Spicy grove, cinnamon tree*
> *What is Africa to me?*

Until recently, and except for fantasy moments, Africa was the lost continent. America supplied the substance—an inhospitable substance but one that almost filled the horizon. The Negro heritage, as an historical fact, was formed inside North America—in religion, language, folklore. To pretend it was *historically* otherwise is to retreat into mythology. Black studies curricula shaped around the idea of "Afro-America" therefore possess an element of make-believe which may eventually prove more frustrating than satisfying. One may find material to support the view that black Americans have retained a collective memory of their African heritage—for example, in Melville J. Herskovits' *Myth of the Negro Past*, a book regarded with scepticism by black and white scholars alike when it was first published in 1941. One may be gratified to learn of the old civilisations of Songhai (etc.) that flourished in Africa before the white men came. One may delight in the dances or the sculpture of the black continent—as indeed the "New Negro" began to do in the 1920s. But Africa and America remain polarised. The black American is still an American, even if he acquires a smattering of some African language. He may well repudiate the white man's religion. Joyce Yeldell, a young black poet, puts the point in "Why, Mahalia?" which is addressed to the gospel singer Mahalia Jackson:

> *I see you standing up there on the hypocritical stage of Christianity with your* hope*ful eyes closed.*
> *I look at your body (pulsating and throbbing with both glory and pain) and wonder—*
>
> *Why, Mahalia?*
>
> *Do you honestly feel* it?
> *Are you really alive with* it?

But unless he becomes a Muslim he is not going to discover an acceptable substitute in the interstices of any Afro-American programme; and, incidentally, the Muslim (Arab) slave-traders are an embarrassment in the historical record of Africa. One suspects that in the long run, black studies curricula will appear rather as a gesture of defiance against white America than as a move towards real union with negritude. "Third world" poverty, and the contrast with white prosperity, will supply fuel for radical anger, and justifiably. Africa will furnish an exotic décor. But its pre-white history, or for that matter the history of Liberia (or of Haiti in the Western hemisphere) will not under close scrutiny provide lasting nourishment.[21]

THE MAIN ARGUMENT against black studies is, however, not that they are intellectually miscellaneous but that they are aimed at the wrong people and reflect a wrong sense of black priorities: that they are, as at present defined, not an advance but a *retreat*—a retreat into the temporary consolations of group therapy. One of the most coolly forceful criticisms comes from the Jamaican economist Sir Arthur Lewis, who is a professor at Princeton and Chancellor of Guyana University. He approves of the emphasis on creating black communities, and of the

[21] "History delivers no proof that black is beautiful; it debunks heroes of all colours.... That famous 'great empire of Ghana,' which is casting its spell on current 'black history,' was a worse mess than the great empire of Ethiopia today." Henry Pachter, "Teaching Negro History," *Dissent* (March–April 1969). See also C. Vann Woodward, "Clio with Soul," *Journal of American History* (June 1969), an admirable statement.

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establishment of black studies programmes on American campuses. But he has no patience with the wider mystique of "Black Power." The crucial fact for him is that blacks in the United States, unlike those in the West Indies or in West Africa, are a *minority*—a mere 11 per cent. The "colonial" analogy, while appealing, is therefore inapplicable. "Freedom" for black Americans can never mean that they will succeed in controlling the government or the economy. The desire to live in black neighbourhoods and to run these is sensible and, within limits, feasible. But the dream of some more comprehensive separation is in his view disastrous:

> The black problem is that while we are 11 per cent of the population, we have only 2 per cent of the jobs at the top, 4 per cent of the jobs in the middle, and are forced into 16 per cent of the jobs at the bottom—indeed into as much as 40 per cent of the jobs at the very bottom. Clearly our minimum objective must be to capture 11 per cent of the jobs in the middle, and 11 per cent of the jobs at the top.

Such a goal can never be accomplished by separatism, whether by schemes for black capitalism or for black revolution. "Power" in America—governmental, financial, technological —will remain predominantly white, whether the whites behave viciously or benevolently, because they are in the majority. The aim for each minority must then be to achieve at least a proportional share in such power. And the road to this, at the top level, is via higher education:

> Whether we like it or not, more Afro-Americans *have* to work in the integrated world, and if we do not train for superior positions there, all that will happen is what happens now—that we shall be crowded into the worst paid jobs.

If the aim of black studies is to help Negroes to overcome their sense of racial inferiority, by all means let them study Afro-American history and culture in high school, but not in college. Let *white* American university students follow black studies, for their own enlightenment, while the black student concentrates upon "engineering, medicine, chemistry, economics, law, agriculture and other subjects which are going to be of value to him and his people."[22]

In other words, black secession from white America is impossible. Except for neighbourhood living units there is no Zion, no national home for Afro-Americans. And there is a difference to be acknowledged between minority status as *discrimination* and as *fact*. Discrimination means that you get a raw deal because you belong to a relatively powerless and unliked group. But there is a minority fact that is unavoidable, and not discriminatory—at least not in intent. The symbols of the whole society are, for the moment, inevitably white symbols. A black American who seeks the highest eminence —say, to be President of the United States—is unlikely to reach it in the near future, unless through the Vice-Presidency, because like a white Southerner he is not a majority symbol. But Arthur Lewis would say that there is a vast amount of territory still to be staked out; and that the task will not be accomplished through the combination of braggadocio and persecution-mania epitomised in the hermetic notion of Blackness taught to Blacks by Blacks.

THESE OBSERVATIONS may seem to end in stalemate. White college professors and deans, sometimes caught between outrage and panic, could say that they do nothing to transform the truculent suspicion, the disingenuous high-mindedness of black militance. Black militants are familiar with and disdainful of pleas for reasonableness, whether emanating from "Negroes" such as Lewis and Wilkins or from white "liberals" such as myself. All too often, academic confrontations only confirm their mistrust. The authorities earn contempt for apparent cowardice and for divided counsels, and then apparently—by digging in at last on some "non-negotiable" demand—reveal that they are actually agents of the "white power structure." The recent troubles (*Newsweek*, 14 July) over black enrolments at Yale's School of Art and Architecture, where somebody set fire to the building, illustrate the atmosphere of savage, mutual hostility, at the end of which the University's city-planning department had disintegrated, the President was at odds with some of his faculty, white student radicals were still

[22] W. Arthur Lewis, "Black Power and the American University," *Princeton University Bulletin* (1969). Cf. Pachter (*Dissent*, March–April 1969), p. 156: "I do not deny a Negro who is a physicist the right to be a black nationalist, if that is his desire; but I implore black nationalists not to prevent Negroes from becoming physicists. They are not helping either black individuals or the black people one whit. 'Black studies' is no substitute for learning a skill; a doctorate in Afro-American studies should be reserved for scholars in this field, and it cannot be a substitute for individual skills and technological and professional training." It is interesting to note that among the leading spirits of Cornell's Afro-American Society, one was an engineering student, another a biochemist.

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more disaffected, and black applicants could feel they were being given the usual run-around.

It would be silly to suppose that black-white friction will disappear overnight. There are too many provocations past and present. Nor are my remarks intended to suggest that there are not powerful emotional reasons behind the desire to create black ghetto and campus enclaves. If I were young and black I would probably react in the same way. I would rather think of myself as a black panther than as one of America's black sheep. Parallels with other minority groups in the United States do not run exactly parallel. No other ethnic minority has experienced slavery. None was so brutally torn away from its birthright. No other came involuntarily. Not even the Chinese and Japanese, still less the Jews, were confronted with such a wall of prejudice.

Nevertheless the evolution of other ethnic minorities in the United States does help to explain the role of black culture, and does hold out genuine prospects for steady improvement. To say this is not to deny the black sense of alienation, or to maintain that black pride could at the moment have any other recourse than separatism, at any rate as the cutting edge of the movement. Yet one cannot make sense of the movement without locating it in the American context. The Negro-Black conflict replicates the clash between middle-aged whites and their radical sons. The *lex talionis* mood of black-power advocates (an eye for an eye, a bullet for a bullet) is logically meaningless unless the payment is in the same, interchangeable coin. In observing that "violence is as American as cherry pie," black-power spokesmen claim *American* privileges: they, too, are automatically entitled to act violently.

And the Africa-America polarity recapitulates the anguish of divided allegiance felt by successive waves and generations of immigrants. Each has wished simultaneously to be accepted into American society, and also to keep faith with its mother-culture (witness the endless symposia in American-Jewish periodicals on Zionism, intermarriage, and the like). Indeed the emphasis on a group's special, *pre*-American values seems to be revived most fervently at the stage when the group has gained sufficient acceptance in the United States to be able to afford the psychological luxury: "what the sons wish to forget, the grandsons wish to remember." At the high point of the stress on "black alienation," the Negro is actually more sure of his entitlement to a place in America than ever before. The puzzle for him is that he cannot, without an artificial effort, recover that which he wishes he could remember.

In one respect, it is true, black culture seems to display the characteristics of an embryonic nation seeking to define its independence. Many of the assertions now made on behalf of black culture recall the struggles of the United States to throw off the thrall of European civilisation. There was the complaint that the New World had evolved a refined culture which the Old World chose to ignore or denigrate. There was also the opposite contrast habitually drawn between the native *vernacular* genius and the European mode of polite culture—which was dismissed as bloodless, snobbish, irrelevant. *"Cross out, please, these immensely overpaid accounts"* was Whitman's plea. John Crowe Ransom, as a Rhodes scholar at Oxford, "sick of my dissonance," knew that England could not be his home. The young Dos Passos, returning to America from a sojourn in Europe, turned his back on "the landscapes corroded with literature. . . ."

Both types of assertion are to be found in expositions of black culture. There is a similar insistence that Negro artists and authors are cultivated, gifted men, who have been slighted either by being categorised as "Negro," or by not being so categorised (with the result that whites are unaware that the talent in question is that of a black man). And there is a similar, opposite insistence that, by contrast with the debilitated literati of white America, black writers are a separate and superior breed, virile and vernacular, bantering and swarthy. There is, too, the denunciation of the theory that "culture" is a universal realm, divorced from social and political considerations—in other words, a claim, repeating that made on behalf of native American literature a century ago, that it must be evaluated on more fundamental grounds than merely aesthetic ones. There is, finally, the annoyance that outsiders (whites/Europeans) should deem themselves equipped to analyse one's own (black-American) literature.[23]

Does such a reflection suggest that black cul-

[23] These positions are all represented in the preface to *Black Expression: Essays By and About Black Americans in the Creative Arts*, edited by Addison Gayle, Jr. (Weybright & Talley, 1969).

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ture is destined to secure its independence from that of white America, as white America gradually did from Europe? Or that the dominant culture of the United States has grown "old and stale"?

THE MATTER IS MORE complicated. The old problem of American "cultural independence" was *never* decisively solved: instead, it disappeared. The American idiom entered, and influenced, the larger concert of world culture, as a distinctive rather than a rival or unassimilable contribution. (Part of the American contribution was in music, and much of that was Negro.)

It seems more accurate to say, and with particular reference to literature, that here too black culture operates *within the American context*. The movement of American literature, in recurrent innovatory phases, has led away from the academy into the street—a street that is always on the wrong side of the tracks, whose language is slangy, mutinous, irreverent. Consciously or unconsciously, today's black writer seems to follow the traditional denial of traditional modes. The crackling, ferocious confidence of LeRoi Jones could be seen as a re-enactment of the comparable defiances, stylistic and thematic, of someone like the e. e. cummings of 40 years ago. Norman Mailer's famous essay on "The White Negro," though it incensed James Baldwin and some other Negroes at the time, recognised that for the white *avant-garde*, black idioms and the notion of the black life-style were beginning to represent the furthest advance towards literary truth. American literature, in short, was now eager to imitate and incorporate negritude, to assume its demeanour.[24] The previous further advance had been made by Jewish writers. Now a new tone was sought, something at once colloquial and apocalyptic, to convey the quality of American life in the 1960s. Since Mailer's essay the trend has been quite evident: for example, in the elided, joky, "Negro" speech of the narrator in John Berryman's poems, and of the disc-jockey hero in Mailer's own *Why Are We In Vietnam?* (1967)—a Texan who boasts that for all he knows (or cares) he may be black.

In this realm, then, black culture is one-up. Black poets, playwrights, and novelists are suddenly in the ascendant. One of them, John A. Williams, may already have come near, in his novels *Sons of Darkness, Sons of Light* (1969), to writing the as-yet unwritable great *comédie noire*. There is an element of false, constricting one-upness in some aspects of black studies; and there is a temptation for everyone to overpraise "black literature" for its mere biter-bit belligerence. Far more important is the real assurance, the authentic sense of arrival. The course on *Negro Literature to 1950* (Phillis Wheatley, William Wells Brown...) is a forlorn venture. The one on *Black Literature since 1950* is devoid of padding and hokum, and is genuine.

As Mailer foresaw, the imaginative part of America has reached the stage at which it finds the black voice indispensable, where a generation ago it only gestured at doing so.[25] Talk of "culture" may seem trivial when other features appear more urgent and less victorious: poverty, exclusion from trade unions, persistent segregation in Southern schools, mounting antagonism among working-class whites. Yet things are on the move, and the state of black culture is an index of more fundamental issues than those usually ventilated in the little magazines.

The themes of black militance may be reparation, revolution, secession. The expression "Afro-American" will not overnight lose its magic, or its schizophrenic implications. But in fact it gives black America two cultures to choose from eclectically, where hitherto there was only the prospect of one culture—to which full admission was barred. The underlying message, however, is that the Negro 11% is passing from the point at which minority status is a disabling social, economic, and psychological handicap, to the position reached 20 years ago by American Jews, at which minority status becomes an advantage, because the group's particular qualities endow its members with a special élan—a determination to reach "the gaining ground"—and because this élan has captured the admiration of the majority. This is happening, and will continue to happen, despite the current lurid scenario.

[24] An intriguing reversal of the situation described in Ralph Ellison's *Shadow and Act* (1964), in which he recalls the spell cast upon him by T. S. Eliot's "The Waste Land," when he was a student at Tuskegee: "Somehow its rhythms were often closer to those of jazz than were those of the Negro poets, and even though I could not understand them, its range of allusions was as mixed and varied as that of Louis Armstrong."

[25] For "black" one might read "non-white": see Leslie Fiedler's *The Return of the Vanishing American* (Cape, 1969, 30s.), in which he allots the principal imaginative role to the American Indian. But some of his argument would apply equally to the careworn, carefree tribes of the black ghettos.

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Günter Eich

The Stilt-Walker

HOWEVER MANY PEOPLE I meet, and I meet many, it is rare that I come across somebody who is happy. But I am, for I have succeeded in reaching the goal towards which I have striven since the days of my youth: I am a representative for Astrol, the firm which produces and markets shoe polish.

So much for the practical side of my occupation, but it is only this in conjunction with the more elevated spiritual side, which is fundamental not only to mine but to all professions, that fills me with perpetual happiness. How can I explain this happiness to somebody who does not know it?

The casual observer cannot really be expected to see the two aspects of my profession as one single aspect. When I have visited in a district all the shops which sell shoe polish, when I have taken all the orders, then I go back to my van, around which some sort of crowd has usually gathered by this time. Mostly it is children. They were not attracted by the dazzling colours of the posters on the sides of the van—one can see any number of vehicles like this, although it has to be admitted that Astrol's colours (bright green and maroon placed in severely clashing juxtaposition) have to a certain extent a painfully attractive effect, much as the eye of the viper transfixes the frog. Rather it is the unconventional structure of my van which has attracted the attention and has even from time to time brought to a halt the kind of person who has seen much and has lost the spark of natural curiosity. In fact, fixed on the sides of the van are ladders, one on the right, one on the left, which slope towards the middle, tapering upwards and towering way above the roof of the van. Between the ladders a man's shoe, bigger than life-size, bright green, is rotating. Down at its sides purple laces hang like curtain cords. If you pull on these laces, and it does not take the children long to hit upon the idea, then a gramophone inside the van is set into motion, presenting a programme of tunes, some solemn, some cheerful and some of that intimate "mood" music, followed by a short, well-worded sales talk. The special effect of all this is that the advertisement is released by an action which the children think is forbidden, while precisely because they think this they are indeed led to carry out the action. Thus, when I approach my van there is always a group of evil-doers, my unwitting helpers, who rush away from the van with a bad conscience. The others look at me expectantly. I stare rigidly past them, open the back door, get in and close the door behind me. In the darkness I get changed.

I MUST ADMIT that even today as I crouch inside my van my heart beats more strongly and I feel a tension which brings me close to tears as I think of the moment when I shall once more open that door. Perhaps the actor waiting in the wings for his big scene knows the feeling. Yet what I have to do is something more spiritual, a more profound initiation than an entry on to the stage. I am about to find my true self.

When I have put on my purple trousers, with legs double the length of my own and therefore carefully rolled up, and the bright green jacket bearing across the back and

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chest the inscription ASTROL, I pick up my red topper and put it on as soon as I have opened the door and stretched out my head.

Thus attired I step on to one of the ladders —it is my custom to vary regularly which one—and climb the rungs, untying as I do so two stilts hidden behind the ladder. Once at the second rung from the top I slide the double-length trouser legs over the stilts, so that they roll out to their full extent. Then I step down a few rungs until I can grasp the wood under my coat and my feet find a grip on the steps of the stilts. I then gently push myself away from the van and commence my walk through the streets, high above the heads of the cheering, applauding crowd.

I STILL REMEMBER well how as a child I caught sight of a stilt-walker for the first time. The tails of his frock coat fluttered as he came down the street. The smoke of burning potato plants wafted in from the fields. Since then potato-plant fires have always reminded me of him. My mother held me on her arm and I looked up at him, shocked into an untypical quietness, for this struck me as the most amazing sight I had ever seen. The stilt-walker bent down to me —believe it or not he could do this—and, holding his bearded face close to me, he popped a malted sweet into my mouth. It was this sweet that filled me with the desire to grow up like him.

When I saw him again years later he had lost none of his old magic. It became even clearer to me that nothing greater existed in this life than to be a stilt-walker.

People do not understand what true happiness is, because they change or abandon their aims, and are tempted to side-track by every difficulty. I, too, faced obstacles and it took a good deal of patience to surmount them and to avoid despairing at the set-backs. When I started to practise walking on stilts in my very early youth I sometimes came close to the depths of despondency. For it was not enough for me to take a few clumsy steps forward; I had to achieve mastery and was determined to learn all the secret arts of this way of walking. The main point is to give an impression of natural ease and eventually to attain a certain terpsichorean grace which seems completely effortless. This in itself represents a considerable achievement but I might say that sacrifices were demanded of me in my quest. Since I was six, not a day has gone by on which I have not spent several hours training. Even now, apart from my public performances, I spend three to four hours a day on my stilts, in winter and summer alike in conditions of rain, snow, black ice or mud, in the motor-traffic of the metropolis, in meadows, in forests; I cross rivers, glaciers and craggy mountain terrain. Highly regarded in the ranks of alpine mountaineers is my ascent on stilts of the Dufourspitze. Already as a child I grew accustomed to sleeping on stilts, leaning against a tree or a wall. I won competitive races against sprinters and galloping horses. On long hikes I put to the test my powers of endurance, my skill on staircases and moving lorries. I succeeded through various modifications in developing the perfect stilts, and I believe that the equipment I now use is unsurpassable in this respect. I make them myself and have three pairs in use; one pair with lights and a horn for urban traffic; a wooden pair for long distance trips and a pair made of light metal for my displays.

BUT WHAT OF THE DIFFICULTIES I faced in my search for mastery in comparison with those which stood between me and the uncomprehending world? I will not mention the scorn and all the humiliations which I had to endure before I reached the first stage in my career, the apprenticeship at the Astrol works.

Here, however, where I felt myself to be on the point of achieving my ambition, there arose a difficulty which almost compelled me to give up my plans. I soon discovered that the stilt-method of advertising was now discontinued, but then I thought I could turn this fact to my advantage. Apparently there was a lack of trained men to continue

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the practice. But when I ventured to enquire one day at the advertising department I learned to my horror that it was not the firm's intention to resume this form of publicity. It was classed as obsolete.

I FELT STUNNED and brooded for weeks, seeking a solution. Was I to admit defeat and concede that all my plans had gone astray, just because a few individuals were lacking in perception? On the other hand, how could I, the rawest recruit, convince the directors that they had thrown overboard the highest values, that they had senselessly done away with everything that this world associated with their name? One idea after another came to me; I rejected them all. I read the biography of Demosthenes, reckoning that a quick, fiery speech would do the trick. But the pebbles under my tongue convinced me that I was no orator. Should I instead write a letter to the management and arouse their better instincts with incontrovertible arguments? No, the sentences I committed to paper were lifeless and unsuitable for fanning the flames of enthusiasm. I came to the conclusion that if anything stood a chance of convincing it was my stilts.

From the factory I stole two green and maroon enamel name-plates with the inscription ASTROL, sewed them on my back and chest and every day after work I went walking through the streets on my stilts. This could not and did not fail to make an impression. Three or four days later I was sent for by the management.

How indescribable was this moment as the sight of my goal flashed before my eyes. Half in a dream I went over the yard of the factory and up the gleaming, polished stairs to the offices. I forgot to knock and stood unheralded in the quietness of the office suite, where I had never before set foot. An unfriendly, white-powdered face turned towards me. I thought this hostility would change into hospitality as soon as I uttered my name but a sharp voice taught me differently. Either the nuisance, it was stated, ceased, or I would be dismissed on the spot. I just do not know how I found the door or the handle.

AFTER I HAD GONE ALONG the landing and down the stairs I stopped short in my tracks and looked out over the factory yard. The window was open and a gentle, mournful breeze was blowing across from the allotment gardens.

I shut the window and went back upstairs, along the corridor and entered the office for the second time, again without knocking. The girl sat typing and I hurried to speak before she could look up.

"I shall continue the nuisance," I said, "I shall continue it even if I am sacked. Even after I am sacked I shall not stop it."

The girl's eyebrows shot up. "Wait a minute," she said and disappeared into the next room. I remained quietly standing there, my heart beating violently in my breast.

It was with the same calmness that I stepped towards the Managing Director of Astrol Ltd., a few moments later. I expected exasperation and sharp words, but to my astonishment he met me with almost paternal affection. I could not believe my ears as he thanked me for my service on stilts to the firm. "I wish," he said, "that all employees of Astrol were moved by the same spirit. But," he went on, and he got up from behind his desk and leaned forward to get a good look at me, "but have you not considered that perhaps you are doing us more harm than good by, if you will pardon the expression, representing Astrol in your patched-up trousers, a tin sign-plate on your chest and wire round your hips?"

I knew that I was blushing. Of course he was right. "I will alter that," I said. "Alter it?" he replied, "the company has no money to do that." "It was not my intention," I answered with surprise, "to expect the company to alter it; I shall do so. I shall not go on my stilts again until you are satisfied with my trousers. I promise you. In any case, I have already saved up for a suit. I will buy red trousers and a green jacket. You are perfectly right in what you say." He stared at

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me and murmured, "Good, good." Then he stretched out his hand over the table and I shook it. "I agree," he said. "Thank you," I replied. He nodded at me and I turned to go.

"Just one more thing," he said. "Why are you doing this, really?"

I did not understand the question. What did he mean? Did he expect that I worked by day for the firm and went on my stilts in the evening for my own personal selfishness? I know for a fact that there are people nowadays who think that commercial travellers' work can be separated from stilt-walking. But how mean business is without the idealistic elevation of stilts! So I hovered, as it were, in the airless room in case I were tempted to get back on my stilts without having communed with the commonplace. You cannot have one without the other—it is the only thing that keeps the world in harmony.

I BEG FORGIVENESS for being happy. I do not want my happiness for myself. I want to share it with others, too, and from time to time I think I have succeeded. In the twilight I walk through the streets of a little town on my stilts. In the easy play of my arms, in my effortless stride I feel near to the pale new moon and the gathering night clouds. Beneath my stilts I feel the wonderful earth, that ball spinning in space. On my back and front gleam the letters which spell out ASTROL. I am followed untiringly by tripping footsteps and I hear the eager breathing and incoherent words of delight: they sound like music to my ears. There by the light of the nearest lamp I bend down and look into the hot flushed face of a child. The child looks up at me and in its eyes I see the sparkling flame of enthusiasm, which will never die.

That is how it is sometimes.

Translated by Keith Hamnett

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James Morris

The Ionians

FINDING MYSELF recently between public ferry services to the island of Paxos, I grandly chartered a caique for myself, and with a crew of four, a bottle of retsina and a book to read, set off across the channel from Corfu feeling notably Milordian—which was only proper, since I was pursuing through those Homeric waters the shades of the British Empire. It is not generally known, as apologists for other ideologies like to say, that for 50 years the seven Ionian Islands were ruled by the Raj. Tossed from the Venetian Empire to the French, and momentarily to the Turks and the Russians, in 1815 they were, under the Treaty of Paris, created "a free and independent State" under British protection: which was to say, in the victorious context of the times, absolutely subject to the British Empire.

The British wanted the islands because of their strategic position, on the fringe of Islam covering the entrance to the Adriatic Sea. Like Gibraltar, Singapore and Bermuda, the Ionians were held to be indispensable to maritime supremacy, and they stood protectively beside the route to India, that prime preoccupation of the imperial strategists. Corfu, the principal island of the group, was accordingly fortified as a naval base, while the other islands of the archipelago each received their little British garrison, the Ionians themselves being obliged to support, under the treaty of cession, a force of 3,000 British soldiers. British administrators, mostly Army officers, established a Government for the islands, and a constitution was devised which, while satisfying some of the forms of liberal enlightenment, in fact left every jot of power satisfactorily in imperial hands.

Throughout the first half of the 19th century the Ionians remained a military station and a popular place of resort for British society. The Order of St. Michael and St. George, later the colonial order of chivalry, was first instituted there, and a succession of notable individualists sailed out to rule the islands, giving the Septinsular Union a peculiar distinction in the annals of Empire. They were often men cast in the old imperial mould, before the climactic of the Indian Mutiny; in those days the Empire-builders had a trace of the freebooter to them still, honouring values of a certain pagan magnificence, working in lordly independence of cable or Parliamentary motion, and sometimes consciously sensing (in Mr. Michael Edwardes' phrase) "the poetry in their actions." For such men the Ionians, which actually included Ithaca, offered a vividly figurative background. Theirs was an age much influenced by Byron's version of classical romanticism, and they often found themselves symbolically at home among the gods, shrines, and legends of the Hellenic world. It was this suggestion of imperial allegory that had brought me to the Ionians myself, and was now compelling me so agreeably through the wine-dark seas.

MY FIRST CONTACT with the Septinsular Union had occurred unexpectedly in Halifax, Nova Scotia. Following the imperial trail in those parts too, I had visited the old garrison library beneath the citadel, where the clock-tower erected by Queen Victoria's father still chimes the hour, and the flag still billows above the redoubt: and there I had found among the military memoirs and the travel tales some books inherited long ago from the disbanded British Garrison Library in Corfu. I much relished this curious reminder of a lost imperial unity, and told myself that one day I would go to the Ionians myself and see what remained there of the Raj and its rulers.

I read all I could beforehand, in the reminiscences of proconsuls and the footnotes of history books, and having acquired by now a connoisseur's knowledge of the imperial symptoms, as we sailed up-channel into the little harbour of Paxos I recognised much that I saw. To the left, on the islet of the Madonna, were the remains of the Venetian fort, which the British had

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garrisoned in their time. To the right, stately above the quay though gone unmistakably down in the world, stood the old British Residency: gabled, arched, balconied and terraced in a sort of Venetian Georgian, with servants' quarters handily attached and the remains of a vegetable garden over the lane behind. The crossing had been rough, and I had sat most of the time half in, half out of the cockpit, thinking odyssean thoughts as the spray stung my face: but here the water was calm, the air was still, the crew were in a condition of cheerful anticipation (for we were going to stay the night there, roistering), and I sat basking on the foredeck, remembering all the Britons who had sailed up this delectable channel to assume command or residence long ago.

And now directly beside us, as we threw a rope to a convenient idler, was the miniscule piazza of Port Gayo, which I knew well as the scene of the best-known incident in the history of British Ionia. It is as pretty a Greek island square as you could wish—copybook Ionian, scrubbed and whitewashed, with a terraced hillside rising above, and the narrow side-streets of the town winding invitingly out of sight. In the centre stands a church, with seats outside for meditative clerics. On the corner is a tavern, with chairs for policemen and fisherfolk to sit back-to-front on exchanging interminable nothings. There is a general store on the left, and a smell of frying fish reached us (for it was midday by now, and blazing) from a restaurant offstage. I use the dramatic metaphor deliberately, for like most such Greek squares, the square at Port Gayo is of a distinctly theatrical style. It is like a rather laboured setting for a fairly comic opera, and in 1858 there occurred here a suitable episode of farce.

MR. GLADSTONE, already one of the most famous of Englishmen, came to Paxos as Commissioner Extraordinary to the Ionian Islands. He had been sent by Disraeli (for he had not turned Liberal yet) to report upon the future of the islands—whether they should remain British, or whether they should be united with the newly independent Greece, as most of the islanders now wished. Gladstone, out of office and a distinguished Homeric scholar, had arrived at Corfu on board H.M.S. *Terrible*, had been saluted by guns, had inspected guards of honour and done all kinds of uncharacteristic things: and though the British in the islands almost universally distrusted or ridiculed him, and the Greeks generally disappointed him by not being sufficiently Athenian, still he evidently enjoyed himself, visiting all seven islands and making many learned and incomprehensible speeches in the Assembly at Corfu.

At the end of the year he came to Paxos, the representative of the mightiest of Empires, visiting one of its most insignificant wards. The Empire was at a moment of change. The Indian Mutiny, just ended, had dampened its dash and flamboyance, forcing the imperialists back upon their dignity, and institutionalising the system. At the same time Victorian England was at its apogee, and new conceptions of moral purpose, national prestige and racial propriety were paramount. In the imperial spirit, as in the imperial architecture, the neo-classic had fallen out of fashion: the Godless freedom of Empire, laced with skullduggery, had given way to an evangelical emphasis on order and improvement. In the Ionians, left much to themselves over the years, the spirit of swashbuckle tenuously survived, and Gladstone was like the emissary of a new order: Sam Smiles sailed with him in spirit, together with Wilberforce, Pugin, the Fairchild Family and the new examination-wallahs of the Indian Civil Service. His very purpose there was unprecedented, for this was the first time the British Empire had ever seriously considered a voluntary and unrequited abdication of sovereignty.

He disembarked upon that quay, and was met by the Greek Orthodox Bishop of Paxos, in his canonicals. Mr. Gladstone, taking the Bishop's hand and reverently kissing it, remained with his head silently bowed, awaiting a benediction. The Bishop did not know what to do. He had certainly never blessed an Anglican statesman before, and was perhaps not quite sure whether it would be liturgically proper. There was an awkward pause. The Resident of Paxos, the commander of the garrison and other Britons watched with amusement from the sidelines—having indeed, as Lord Kirkwall wrote, "considerable difficulty in maintaining the gravity befitting so solemn an occasion." The Bishop hesitated; the statesman waited; and then, reaching opposite decisions at the same instant, the one bent down to bestow his benediction, the other straightened himself to stand.

They collided: and the barely detectable laugh that arose from the British bystanders was a last laugh from the old Empire—a chuckle from the buccaneers and the nabobs, the freelance rulers of Punjab or Sarawak, the fur traders of the West, the heedless Anglo-Irish and the plantation princes of the tropics. The pagan exuberance was leaving the British Empire: the Raj was taking a Gothic turn. Presently the joyous elegance of classicism was overwhelmed by High Victorian, and six years later the Ionian Islands themselves, Ithaca and all, were handed over to the Kingdom of Greece.

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FOR MOST OF THEIR HALF CENTURY in the islands the British remained absolute autocrats. There was a Senate and a Legislative Assembly in Corfu, and perfunctory gestures of democracy were made in all the other islands—from north to south Paxos, Levkas, Ithaca, Cephalonia, Zante and the distant Cerigo, south of the Morea. Real power, though, was in the hands of the Lord High Commissioner in Corfu ("the Lord High") and the British Residents in each of the other islands. At first the Ionians did not much care, having an immense respect for the nation which had defeated Napoleon. Later the affection soured a little, and the general feeling among the islands became overwhelmingly in favour of union with Greece—"*Enosis*" was a word as familiar in the Ionians in the 1850s as it was to be in Cyprus a century later.

The British slightly liberalised the system with a new constitution in 1848, that year of reform, but mostly continued to think that they knew best. Few of them knew Greek or Italian, the twin languages of the Ionians, and they ruled with a bluff if benevolent disregard of local aspirations—"keeping all classes," as D. T. Ansted wrote in 1863, "in the condition of children, so that they are not much more fitted to conduct their own affairs than they were half a century ago." As usual, the British built good roads, laid on fresh drinking-water, and made useful objects like light-houses and lock-ups. They greatly improved the quality of justice, and they kept order—political disturbances apart—in a region that was traditionally among the most turbulent in the Mediterranean. (They also introduced the potato, which old-school Orthodox priests promptly denounced as the original Eve's apple).

But most of them did not think highly of Ulysses' successors, and they continued to run their bailiwicks despotically, as they might have organised Madrasis or Baluchis in the days of John Company. It was a source not so much of chagrin as of astonishment to them that the Ionians were prepared to swop the security of imperial rule for the uncertainties of *Enosis*: or as Lord Kirkwall put it, "it is of course mortifying to the pride of Englishmen that the Ionians should prefer to be united to poor, weak and distracted Greece, to remaining under the protection of strong, wealthy and well-governed England. . . ." I found this easy enough to understand. The Ionians are among the loveliest places in the world, but their temper is Levantine rather than European, and to Britons of another era they must have cried out for firm and incorruptible command. In Corfu especially, now as then the centre of island activity, I sometimes caught myself supposing that since the statues dotted here and there were patently of Europeans, they must be in honour of the British.

SOME OF THEM ARE, for even now the imperial grandees of the Ionians are not altogether forgotten. Three of them I felt I knew, having crossed their tracks before, and all three turned out to be present still, if not in effigy at least in reputation. "King Tom" Maitland, for instance, is still apparently the bane of Corfiote liberals, as he was from the very start. He was the first Lord High Commissioner of all, and it was he who devised the original constitution, and set the style of the Protectorate. He was a breezy and bibulous old Highlander, rough of tongue and uncouth of habit, very dirty, very rude, very eccentric and at heart very kind. "Who the devil are you?" was the first thing he said, when he met one of his subordinate officials for the first time. "I hope you're not such a damned scoundrel as your predecessor." He once entered the assembly of Septinsular Senators, who met at that time in his house, wearing only a shirt, a red nightcap and slippers, and after taking one supercilious look at the assembled politicians, expostulated in his loud Scottish voice "Damn them! Tell them all to go to hell!"—and went back to bed. When he died during a visit to Malta, so the diarist Private Wheeler tells us, the Corfiotes gave him a sort of vicarious funeral, with a coffin before the altar in the church of St. Mark's, thousands of candles and dirges sung all day: while the soldiers of the garrison "drank a glass in memory of King Tom, got as drunk as lords and went to bed happy as princes."

King Tom's memory is all over Corfu. He laid out the stately Esplanade beside the sea, he built the porticoed hall of the Legislative Assembly in the Plati Kadowni and the Anglican church, like a Doric temple, which is now the Greek garrison church within the Old Fortress. Above all he built the Palace of St. Michael and St. George, the official residence of the Lord High Commissioners. This remains a principal monument of Corfu, though as long ago as 1884 Murray's Handbook was calling it "a large building devoid of architectural merit, now fast going to decay." It is called the Royal Palace now, and in the unavoidable absence of royalty is partly shut up, and partly used as a museum; but it remains a very grand affair—embellished with the seven emblems of the Septinsular Union, attended by guard rooms and belvederes, classical in style, imperial in manner, and built by Maltese craftsmen of Maltese sandstone. Its opening, in 1823, was a marvellously jolly occasion. There were boxing matches in the great square outside, and inter-island athletic contests made dazzling with

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local cosumes. Outside the palace a stream of competitors tried all day to climb a 40-foot greased pole to grab the pigskin of wine, the goat, the lamb or the doubloon suspended from the top. Greek horsemen galloped around the square, plucking rings from lines, brigandish Albanians wrestled, and at the concluding tournament all the competitors were in antique dress or local costume. No wonder King Tom, whatever his political offences, seems to have commanded a certain wry affection among his subjects: when he died they erected an elegant Ionian rotunda in his honour, and it stands there at the end of his Esplanade still, emblazoned with his name in the vernacular.

IN THE 1820s Lord Guilford came to the Ionians. Like the Scientologists after him, he had hit upon the idea of founding a university there: for he was an eager Hellenist, rich, and was shocked that modern young Greeks had no university to go to at all. King Tom dissuaded him from establishing it in Ithaca, the home of Ulysses himself, and in the end he plumped for Corfu. It was a good second best. Not only was it the Corcyra of the ancients, but it was also the place where Lord Guilford himself, in 1791, had been received into the Greek Orthodox Church. For this civilised man, Eton and Christ Church, and a son of the North who lost the American Empire, was a genuine cosmopolitan. He spoke six languages, wrote poems in classical Greek, and was a Fellow of the Royal Society. He had been the first British Governor of Ceylon, a post he found uncomfortably beyond his capacities, and ever since the British acquisition of the Ionians he had devoted his energies to the idea of the university.

The Ionian Academy was founded in 1824, with Guilford as its Chancellor. He lavished upon it books, scientific equipment, manuscripts and works of art, and for a time it really was the chief centre of higher learning in the Greek-speaking world. It had four faculties, a library of 35,000 volumes, and a worthy collection of antiquities. Academic dress was an ancient Greek costume, and the enthusiastic earl, who lived on campus, preferred to wear his robes all the year round, and was often to be seen attending dinner parties disguised in effect as Sophocles. The British of Corfu were vastly amused by this eccentric scholar, and the Corfiotes have not forgotten him yet, maintaining a flattering statue of him, *sub fusc*, in a garden off the Esplanade. The Ionian Academy building, though, was destroyed with all its books and busts during the last war, and nothing more remains to summon the image of His Lordship, head bowed in Hellenism, gliding from lecture to lecture all in purple.

THE SHADE OF C. P. NAPIER was easier to evoke, but it meant taking a ship to the island of Cephalonia, the biggest but one of the poorest of the group, which lies some 80 miles south of Corfu. The island was badly hit by the earthquake of 1953, and its buildings are mostly new, but I found traces of the British all the same. I had heard, for instance, of Captain John Parker's loyal dog, which having demonstrated his fidelity during a murderous attack in 1849, was later erected in effigy upon his master's tomb: and rummucking through the sweet overgrown greenery of the British Cemetery at Argostoli, pungent with wild garlic, sure enough near the back wall I found the animal, headless through vandalism but still on guard. I saw "Byron's Ivy," a pergola at Metaxata where the poet liked to sit in the sun, and I bought a coin of the imperial period, with the Lion of St. Mark on one side and Britannia on the other. I visited the little white lighthouse the British had erected on the Argostoli point (*cost exclusive of lantern* £117) and found that though it had been destroyed in the earthquake, it had been rebuilt to more or less the same design, in concrete instead of stone. I met people who well remembered the handsome prison building, to the very latest circular design, erected on the quayside at Listuri, and I was shown the crumbled steps and gateway that remained of the Anglican church. On the causeway across Argostoli bay there still stood the obelisk upon which, in 1813, the Cephalonians had inscribed their moving tribute to a victorious people—"To The Glory Of The British Nation" (it was pettily chipped off by the Italians during the last war).

Best of all I found that Charles Napier, for eight years in the 1820s the virtual dictator of this island, was still intimately remembered. Napier was an archetypical pre-Mutiny imperialist: a bold, good-hearted, outspoken loner, bespectacled, long-haired and peculiarly dressed (the French remember his name in a sort of hooded topee—*le chapeau Napier*). He was the eldest of five brothers, three of whom became generals while two were eminent historians, and was a man of mingled belligerence and sensitivity. He was the author of a historical romance called *Harold*, and he was later to become famous as the conqueror of Sind and the author of the apocryphal cable "Peccavi": he called that conquest "a very advantageous, humane, and useful piece of rascality," and thought the best recipe for subduing a country was "a good thrashing first and great kindness afterwards." I love this old greatheart, and had followed his career with increasing admiration from his statue in Trafalgar Square, paid for mostly by private soldiers, by way of Bermuda and the

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Indus to this, the first and favourite administrative post of his career.

He adored Cephalonia. "Cephalonia is never out of my mind or my heart," he wrote. "They say first love is the truest, and Cephalonia is mine." He was not speaking figuratively, for he produced at least two illegitimate children on the island: when he sailed for home their mother, Anastasia, first decided to keep them in Cephalonia, then changed her mind and pushed them into the harbour in a boat in the direction of his departing ship. He took them to England and cherished them, naming one of them Cephalonia, and marrying a widow to bring them up: they inherited a small plot of land he had acquired in Argostoli.

Like many another officer of Empire, Napier swore by his own district. The Greeks were "worth all other peoples put together," and the Cephalonians were the best of the Greeks. At a time when most of his colleagues stood aloof to the islanders, Napier stood stoutly by them. He learnt Greek and Italian, he made many local friends, and he backed his poor subjects unafraid against the depredations of property-owners or higher authority—"the poor," he once wrote, "are like slow sailing vessels, deeply laden with the heavy cargo of poverty." He did not think in terms of political franchise. England itself was still an oligarchy, and Napier had no time to fiddle about with radical notions. He governed the island personally, with the help of the best of the local gentry (the others reminded him of the worst sort of Irish absentee landlord). He was generally at odds with his boss in Corfu, the extravagant Frederick Adam, whom he detested. He resented all outside interference, scoffed at constitutional advance, worked like a slave building roads, starting schools, dredging harbours, planting forests, conveying water, founding farms and repressing corruption.

Napier remains, I suppose, the best-known modern historical character of Cephalonia. There is a square named for him in Argostoli, and the land he owned there is now Napier Garden—there was a bust of him there, until the Italians destroyed it. His roads and conduits still function, some of his buildings still stand, and it is not fanciful to claim that even now the pleasant welcome any Briton gets in Cephalonia is due in part to his example.

"The English are very sympathetic," I was told there. "Do you know Mr. Binnie?"

I did not, but I soon found him. He stands square in the Napier tradition. A former euphonium player in the band of the South Wales Borderers, he married a Greek wife and emigrated to the island upon his retirement from the hotel business. There he lives happily ever after. He has an agreeable house and a speed-boat, knows everybody, and plays the euphonium in the Argostoli Municipal Band, wearing a uniform so brassly-helmeted and gaudily-plumed, so magnificently buttoned and epauletted, that Napier himself would have worn it with complacency.[1]

In the prime of the Septinsular Union the Ionians were a favourite port of call for well-heeled British tourists. With their heavenly spring climate and picturesque peasantry, their incomparable views of sea and mountain shore—with the mass of Albania looming so thrillingly across the water, and the fireflies wavering in the dark moat of the Corfu fortress—with their scents of sage and orange blossom and wild flowers, the dappled shade of their great olive groves, the limpid blue of their coves—with the Cephalonians casting flies from cliffs to catch swallows, and the Corfiotes processing with the embalmed body of St. Spyridion, and the Zantean watchmen alert in their elevated branch-houses among the vineyards—with the Greek wind curling the Ionian waves, the flying caiques of the treacherous island waterways, the old Venetian hugger-mugger towns and the sacred sites of Homeric legend—with all these pleasures actually supervised by the British flag, the Ionians were perhaps the most inviting possession of the entire Empire.

Moreover they were conveniently situated on the flank of the Grand Tour, enabling British philhellenes, surfeited with the *ouzos* and *moussakas* of their addiction, to drop off for a week or two of claret and mutton chops. Lord High Commissioners were plagued by well-connected young visitors with letters of introduction and classical educations, and sometimes tremendous swells put into harbour in their yachts, to hobnob with the Admiral and set society ablush. Byron, who once thought of buying Ithaca, spent some weeks in Cephalonia on his way to Missolonghi—he much admired Napier, and mentioned him on his death-bed. Edward Lear lodged for some months in Corfu, which he thought "a very very very small tittle-tattle place." The young Disraeli sailed into Corfu once, with his disreputable friend James Clay, and strutted around the island dressed as a Greek pirate, in a blood-red shirt, red slippers

[1] That irrepressible original once appeared, at an immensely ceremonial dinner given in his honour in India, wearing a frock-coat, buff corduroy breeches, and an English hunting-cap peaked in front, swathed in white cotton behind. When he sat down at the end of his speech the band struck up "The King of the Cannibal Islands."

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and a blue striped jacket. And it was in these hospitable waters that the extraordinary Joseph Wolff was shipwrecked in 1828, on his way to Bokhara, Balkh and Kabul—Napier looked after him, too, and remained his friend for life.

As a military station the Ionians seem to have retained a certain 18th-century manner well into the Victorian era. In the early years the Ionian Army, as it was called, received many soldiers who had commuted some punishment into a long-service engagement (later they were posted to a special regiment in Sierra Leone): but during the half-century of the British occupation many well-known British regiments did a tour of duty in the islands. The officers and their ladies loved it, contemptuous though they generally were of the Greeks—it must have been by far the most comfortable posting the service offered. We see them in old pictures serenely promenading in the Esplanade at Corfu, while at the beauty spot called Pelleka, so Ansted austerely suggests, "large deposits of oyster shells and broken champagne bottles will clearly indicate to future generations the important uses and sacred character of the place."[2]

THE PRIVATE SOLDIERS generally seem to have been drunk. They were allowed to drink only in designated grog-shops, called canteens, whose proprietors served them desperate concoctions of dregs and tailings. The men accepted the stuff fatalistically—it was one of the very few stations where wine was the normal soldiers' drink. "Damn all canteens," they used to say, according to a contemporary eye-witness, "come on though, bloody *cattivo*, no goodo the vino, you son of a bitch—give us another touch"—and so they would spend their evenings, until at last, penniless, sick and blind drunk, they staggered vomiting home to barracks. When a reforming officer once angrily overturned a barrel of hooch in the gutter, the soldiers rushed out of the canteen and scooped it up with their mugs.

At first the British mixed freely, and on equal terms, with the Ionians, and local grandees were loaded with favours and honours. The Order of St. Michael and St. George was founded, in 1818, specifically to reward services to the Crown in Malta and the Ionians—a powerful instrument of supremacy, King Tom its inventor thought, "and certainly the cheapest that we can make use of in these parts." Its expressive motto was *Anspicium melioris aevi*—"Token of a better age"—and the first knights of the Order, later to be bestowed upon a thousand Sir Reginalds and Sir Georges, all had names like Sir Platos or Sir Athanasius. The British even played official parts in both Greek Orthodox and Roman Catholic ceremonies on the island. The commanding general carried a huge candle in the Orthodox Passion procession; four British colonels held a silken canopy over the officiating priest in the Catholic procession, preceded by a file of infants dressed as cherubim; and when the patron saint of Corfu, St. Spyridion, was removed from his sepulchre each year and placed upright before the high altar in his church, British soldiers stood on guard, cheerfully accepting gratuities from devotees who wished to kiss the holy feet.

Sometimes Englishmen married Corfiotes, and descendants of these unions may still be found: other Ionian families have remained consistently Anglophile from that day to this, sending their children to English schools, speaking the purest English themselves. On Corfu they still eat apple chutney and drink *tsin-tsin-beera* —until the last war it was still sold in proper stone ginger bottles. They still play cricket, too, with slight adjustments to the rules and terminology: "How's That?" is not only an appeal, but also a verdict of "Out," "full toss" is *bombada*, "bowled" is *apo xila*. The Royal Navy, in the days when it had a Mediterranean Fleet, regularly sent teams to play the Byron Cricket Club on the gravel pitch in front of the Palace.[3]

Odd words, tastes and manners linger, too, from the days of the Empire. A thin but recognisable patina survives, and is now being revarnished by charter flights direct from Southend and package tours alternating with Majorca. I was in Corfu for the celebration of Independence Day, and thought the procession around the town had a distinctly British air to it—like a British parade thirty years ago, say, when the Territorials still provided a spanking detachment, and the silver band still puffed. The soldiers wore old-fashioned British steel hats and carried wholesome Lee-Enfields, the police were unmistakably descended from bobbies, the sailors wore bell-bottoms, and just as I was thinking how easily King Tom would fit into it all, or even Lord Guilford in his gold hair-band, around the corner came the Cubs and Scouts. They were staved and wide-hatted for Mafeking and Baden-Powell, and above their heads swayed the wolf-head on a stick—an emblem translated by the alchemy of that same Empire from the foetid Indian jungles to this soft refuge of Corcyra.

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[2] Lafcadio Hearn spent part of his childhood in the Ionians, his father being an Army surgeon, and among the Army babies born on Corfu (to Colonel and Mrs. Thomas Somerville, 3rd Buffs) was Edith Somerville of Somerville and Ross.

[3] When Mr. Michael Green played there a few years ago he was delighted to see the entry in the scorer's book GREEN APO XILA PROMETHEUS 2.

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MR. GLADSTONE did not bring British rule in the Ionians to an end, though he perhaps put paid to its spirit. His mission was complicated by the untoward publication, in the London *Daily News*, of some highly confidential dispatches from Corfu, and all in all he was not a great success. He irritated the British by wanting to change things at all; he disappointed the islanders by declining to recommend immediate union with Greece; he embarrassed his best friends by arranging for the recall of the "Lord High," Sir George Young, and inexplicably assuming the position himself. After three months he went home to England, where he presently crossed to the Liberal benches and became Lord Palmerston's Chancellor.

But his very presence upon that Paxos quay, it seemed to me, marked the end of an era: not merely for the Ionians, but for the British Empire. The more I thought about him, as I wandered about the island, inspecting the British waterworks behind the town, with a staircase like Persepolis, pillars like a little Baalbek and VR on the water-conduits—as I pottered here and there, identifying the last pilasters of British Hellenism, for anything classically Greek in the Ionians is likely to have been Empire-built—as I disinterred those rumbustious pro-consuls, affectionately remembering their fantasies and failings—so Mr. Gladstone's figure down there in the whitewashed square seemed ever more portentous. I imagined him all in black, with a top hat, and his voice seemed to boom polysyllabically at me through the sage-brush.

It was only later that I discovered a deeper symbolism to the occasion. Nineteen centuries earlier still, during the reign of Tiberius, a ship from Egypt had been sailing past this island, bound for Italy, when Thamus its master heard a voice from the shore. *"Thamus!"* it cried. *"Thamus! Pan magus tethneeke!"—"Great Pan is dead!"* Whereupon, we are told, "there were such piteous cries and dreadful shrieking as hath not been the like... at that time all Oracles surceased, and enchanted Spirits that were wont to delude the people henceforth held their peace."

Christian commentators have assumed that this was the moment of the Crucifixion, when the false gods of the ancients died; others pine still for those enchanted Spirits, bathed in fire and dressed in bright colours.

Above Oldham

All night the dripping lights
streak the leaden petals of the hills;
lorries loaded with shoddy or stone
scream like insomniac birds

by the peat's stinking breath,
the clown's masks of lit pubs
and the creep of soupy streams
like snot from a running nose.

The moors are quiet as bone
alert with pleasure-seekers, foxes, whores
who melt at the newsagent's light
when busloads of Indians feed the mills.

At dawn we watched a stoat
with a mesmerising eye
silence and clean teeth
slit a hare's throat.

Glyn Hughes

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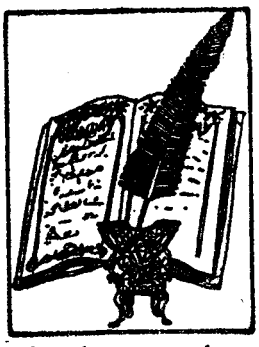

Column

I HAVE ALWAYS been inclined to attribute to Arthur Koestler's *Darkness at Noon* an almost unique significance among the literary works of our time; not only because it has done more than any other novel to determine people's attitudes to contemporary history but because in a strange way the book has developed a life of its own which at moments seems to become quite independent of its author's intentions. Koestler's object was to expose the reality which lay behind the façade of the great Russian state trials of the 1930s, and he did it so effectively that to thousands, even millions, of people communism, and the communist party, stripped of at least one layer of illusion, have never looked the same again.

Yet the logic of the book is so double-edged (dialectical a Marxist might say) that it is at least as easy to be convinced by the arguments of Gletkin as those of Rubashov, and indeed, on certain assumptions, which Rubashov himself shared, they are as incontrovertible as Rubashov himself finally found them. One might even think, just as Blake thought Milton was subconsciously on the side of Satan, that Koestler was subconsciously on the side of Gletkin; and I take as a sign of the book's vitality that such an interpretation is possible, though certainly nothing could be further from the author's mind.

Perhaps another sign of its vitality is the book's continued relevance to events which occurred long after those which originally inspired it. It has certainly had an odd history. Originally published in an English translation in 1940, it sold less than four thousand copies in its first year of publication; but when, as *Le Zéro et l'Infini*, it was published in France in 1946, it sold four hundred thousand copies and broke all pre-war French publishing records. The reason, Koestler tells us in his autobiography, was not literary but political. Immediately after the war, France had its own experience of a reign of terror exercised by the communist party, short-lived yet savage enough to give *Le Zéro et l'Infini* what Koestler calls a "symbolic actuality" which assured it of an understanding which *Darkness at Noon* had failed to find in England.

But for the same reason *Darkness at Noon* has been denied any audience at all among the millions of people to whose experience it has an even greater relevance than it could possibly have in any part of the western world; that is to say, among those who, in the Soviet Union and its satellites, have had to live under the rule of the communist party, not for weeks or months, but for so long that for them it has become part of the established order of nature.

And yet, even there, when once its opportunity has arisen, the book has immediately asserted itself.

> A remarkable novel exists, known all over the world except in our country, the novel *Darkness at Noon* by Arthur Koestler, which accurately describes the mechanism of Soviet trials in the second half of the 'thirties, the logic of the interrogators, the judges, the prosecutors and the accused who themselves become collaborators of the investigation and prosecution.... The most tragic thing is that a decade later these events repeated themselves with the force of a natural law.

The quotation comes from an article by the Czech historian, Jaroslav Opat, which was published in the summer of 1968 during the brief interlude of freedom enjoyed by Czechoslovakia before it was terminated by the Soviet invasion. It serves as an introduction to a remarkable article, "Koestler Revisited," in the latest issue of that admirable journal, *Survey*. The article is a review of the information which, as a result of that short rebirth of freedom, has come to light about the judicial terror in Czechoslovakia in the 1950s; its author, Otto Ulc, was himself a member of the Czechoslovak judiciary during that period, but as a judge in civil cases only was in no way involved in the political trials which were strictly affairs of state.

His article begins with a statement of the public scenario of the Stalinist witch-hunt which over the years developed, in the U.S.S.R., Czechoslovakia or elsewhere, something of the formalism and rigidity of the French classical drama of the 17th century. It comprised three acts, as follows:

Act I: The leadership initiates a propaganda campaign against certain forms of ideological deviations; Trotskyism, revisionism, bourgeois nationalism, or whatnot.

Act II: Political deviation is identified as an act of treason, and those originally criticised for ideological errors are arrested as enemies of party and state, traitors, spies, and saboteurs.

Act III: A public trial, in which the defendants, duly "processed" by the security police, recite the "processed" evidence against themselves, which they have learned by heart, confess their crimes and are sentenced and executed.

This formula, however, does not cover the

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real crisis of the drama, which does not take place on the stage at all but in the cellars, the torture chambers, and the interrogation rooms of the secret police; here the accused are rehearsed and "processed" for the parts they are to play in Act III. It was of course on this moment in the drama, so gruesome and so alien to all western conceptions of the judicial process, that *Darkness at Noon* concentrated, and one of its great triumphs was to make it credible to the western reader.

IT IS WITH THIS MOMENT ALSO that "Koestler Revisited" is concerned, and with the sickening inevitability, the almost pedantic faithfulness to the established text, with which the drama which was played out in Moscow in the thirties was repeated in Prague in the '50s. Its most spectacular performance, of course, was the trial in 1952 of Rudolf Slansky, the general secretary of the Czech communist party, Vlado Clementis, the foreign secretary, and twelve other high officials of the party or the state, all of whom confessed to the charges against them and were duly committed and sentenced to death or life imprisonment.

"Koestler Revisited" is an account of the methods by which this result was achieved, of the stage management required to bring the drama successfully to its grand finale. It corresponds very closely to the account given in *Darkness at Noon*; at the same time, the physical and psychological pressures brought to bear upon the defendants in Prague were so terrible that they seem to leave no room for the metaphysical struggle that Rubashov engaged in with Gletkin. We do not of course know the precise turn of the screw which finally broke a man like Slansky; we do know however that the physical and psychological means to hand were sufficient to shatter any man's spirit. It is true that one of the three defendants who survived the trial, Artur London, did indeed shrink from the universal condemnation by world communist opinion which he would have incurred by a refusal to collaborate with the prosecution. "There was no way out other than to accept, in the same way that Lenin's old comrades and the accused in Budapest and Sofia had accepted." Nevertheless, he was only reduced to such a state of docility after he had at first resisted and had then been tortured for a considerable period.

IT IS INDEED not the dialectical subtlety but the boundless brutality of the methods employed in the pre-trial investigation which astonish and appal one. One can grade them in a mounting scale of horror and sadism, starting from the comparatively human level at which the accused was offered a lighter sentence if he would confess; such promises were rarely kept. Or, as in the case of Clementis, the authorities played upon and manipulated a prisoner's sense of guilt for offences, like opposition to the German-Soviet pact, which were quite unrelated to those with which he was charged. Some were threatened with reprisals, including torture, against their families if they refused to confess. Greater leniency was promised in return for implicating others.

Such inducements, however, were supplemented by beatings which, according to survivors of German concentration camps, exceeded in savagery anything they had ever known, and by other forms of physical brutality, like the crushing of the genital organs; the favourite weapon of assault was the rubber truncheon known jocularly by the police as "the woman's dream."

Beatings, however, were only a part of a process designed to produce a progressive and total disintegration of the defendant's personality and reduce him literally to the condition of an animal. Solitary confinement created a sense of total isolation and helplessness. Tricks like blindfolding and the serving of meals at bizarre and irregular intervals disorientated the prisoner in time and space, so that he lost all sense of reality. Cold and hunger; deprivation of sleep; sudden and drastic changes of temperature from intense cold to intense heat; cold compresses applied to the head which when they dried and shrank caused intense pain; hallucinatory drugs, including mescalin, which transported the prisoner on trips into the void; all these were brought to bear upon the prisoner's personality, so that it flew apart like a shattered crystal. There were further refinements of degradation; one was to make a prisoner behave literally like a dog, crawling on all fours and eating his meals in this posture, his hands manacled, at his guard's feet. Kafkaesque situations were created specifically in order to induce a sense of absurdity and unreality. It is impossible to guess whether the mental or physical tortures were the worst.

Such surrealist conditions produced strange reactions; it was as if the prisoner had suffered a similar transformation to the hero of Kafka's *The Metamorphosis*, who suddenly found himself changed into a giant bug. Condemned to a state of total isolation and helplessness, by a process of "false projection" he came to see in the only human contact available to him, his interrogator, an image of compassion and friendship, with whom he lived in "comradely brutality," and longed to earn his approval by a perfect performance in the dock of the part in which he had been so carefully and so cruelly rehearsed.

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IN THE SLANSKY TRIAL, there was a strange echo of *Darkness at Noon*. One of the defendants was Koestler's friend Otto Katz, alias André Simon, once a colleague of his in Willy Muenzenberg's International Workers' Aid and all its proliferating communist front organisations. In his public confession of guilt to the absurd charges of being a British spy, saboteur, and Zionist agent, he repeated as closely as he could remember it Rubashov's last speech under similar circumstances. Simon's last words were: "I . . . belong to the gallows. The only service I can still render is to serve as a warning example to all who, by origin or character, are in danger of following the same path to hell. The sterner the punishment. . . ." At this point his voice became too low to be intelligible.

In Koestler's view, Simon, by repeating Rubashov's speech, was trying to convey a message that he had been brought to confess to charges as false as those made against Rubashov. But of course, if this was so, his confession was "false" in a different sense from Rubashov's. It would have been a contradiction in terms to convey such a message if he had come by the same path as Rubashov to confessing his guilt; for Rubashov had been genuinely convinced by the logic of Gletkin's argument that, as a loyal member of the Party, the only service he could finally perform was by publicly admitting to crimes he did not commit.

Yet if Simon's speech was a plagiary of Rubashov's, Rubashov's speech was a plagiary of yet another public confession; the last words of Nicolai Bukharin in the trial of the "Bloc of Rightists and Trotskyists" in Moscow in 1938. Thus an even darker shadow than Rubashov's fell across the courtroom in Prague as André Simon made his confession of guilt. And we now have an excellent opportunity of judging for ourselves how far either Rubashov or Simon reproduced the behaviour of their predecessors whose words they both paraphrased. For in his fascinating *The Trial of Bukharin* (just published by Batsford) Dr. George Katkov has now carefully analysed the motives, both of Bukharin himself and of the prosecution, led by Andrey Vyshinsky, which lay behind the last of the great Moscow trials, on which Koestler's book was based. In many respects his account fully confirms Koestler's fictional version of it; in some however it points to rather different conclusions.

IT WAS OF THE ESSENCE of Rubashov's case that he had been induced, by the logic of Gletkin's arguments, to which he could find no satisfactory answer, to collaborate with the prosecution in proving the truth of the false charges made against him. Dr. Katkov's analysis of Bukharin's trial, however, shows that Bukharin, while admitting his guilt in general terms, took every opportunity he could to deny the detailed charges of which he was accused; so much so, indeed, that one might suspect that his object was to discredit even his general admission of guilt. Thus it would seem that the nature of the pact between Bukharin and the prosecution was rather different from that between Rubashov and Gletkin. For, according to Dr. Katkov, Bukharin still adhered to his criticisms of and opposition to the Stalinist "general line" but refrained from trying either to make clear in what they consisted or to make any defence of them; but at the same time he stubbornly refused to admit, sometimes to the discomfiture of Vyshinsky, that opposition to the party line was necessarily counter-revolutionary, which was essentially the point of which Gletkin succeeded in convincing Rubashov. In this sense at least, Bukharin, though a lost man, was not the morally and intellectually broken man that Rubashov was, and André Simon's last words, with their implicit message, may indicate that perhaps in this he was nearer to Bukharin than Rubashov.

Dr. Katkov indeed suggests that what motivated Bukharin's behaviour at the trial was something very different from that irremovable residuum of loyalty to the Party which inspired Rubashov. For Bukharin's trial was staged under the shadow of the *Anschluss* with Austria and the immediate threat of war; and in Bukharin's eyes it may well have appeared that in such a time of crisis it was the duty of all to rally behind the government, even if it was as bad a government as Stalin's, and even though it might cost one, not only one's life, but one's place in history. The explanation is all the more plausible because even such irreconcilable enemies of Stalin's as Trotsky and Dan, though under no such pressures as Bukharin, came to the same conclusion. It was to Russia, not to the party, that Bukharin was loyal, and it was here, perhaps that Vyshinsky found the basis for the pact between defendant and prosecution which led Bukharin to uphold, in Dr. Katkov's words, "that most powerful weapon of the very tyranny to which he had fallen victim—institutionalised mendacity."

THE OTHER DAY I asked Koestler what he had felt in reading "Koestler Revisited," with all its echoes of his books. He said: "We think we knew all these things and we think that we remembered them all. Yet whenever we read about them recurring again, it is with exactly the same sickening sense of horror and nausea as when we first became alive to their existence. . . ."

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FILM

Trifling with the Dead

By John Weightman

A LOT OF PEOPLE have praised Ken Russell's film, *Women in Love*, and I would agree that, on the whole, it is a good picture. But what puzzles me is why, if Ken Russell could make a good film, he should not have made a better one. Why is Lawrence's narrative distorted in apparently unnecessary ways in Larry Kramer's screen-play? Why do people who claim to admire and respect Lawrence take liberties with his dialogue? Why—to extend the query—should the whole undertaking be surrounded by the kind of commercialism that Lawrence himself deplored, so that "D. H. Lawrence's famous novel," serialised in the *Evening Standard*, is not Lawrence's original prose but some anonymous person's re-hash of the story as told on the screen? Publicity has become so remote from its object that the naked figures on the posters advertising *Women in Love* are not even recognisable as any of the actors in the film; they are clearly models doing an *ad hoc* clinch, since any nudity is thought useful for bringing in the crowds. I think Lawrence would have expressed himself savagely about all this, and it would have marred his gratification at being partly understood.

Granted that a play or a novel has to be adapted for the cinema, *i.e.*, has to be re-thought in terms of moving, visual images, it is curious that film-people should take such extraordinary liberties with the works they lay their hands on, as if they could hardly bear to keep strictly to the meaning and the spirit of the originals. A still more striking example at the moment is *The Mad Woman of Chaillot*, which has hardly any redeeming features at all. Whereas Jean Giraudoux's original play is rapid, witty and spirited, Bryan Forbes' version is heavy and overblown. Instead of the Mad Woman being a glorified tramp living in a Parisian basement—a kind of tutelary spirit or witch who keeps watch over Chaillot, as the other crones in her coven keep an eye on Passy, Concorde, and Saint-Sulpice—she is turned into an eccentric millionairess inhabiting an enormous, richly furnished house, and this ruins the central point of the work, which is the spiritual distinction of a fey character totally lacking in worldly goods. The film blunts and mangles practically all the jokes and poetic effects of the play, and the only good bit is a rather elegant take-off of Billy Graham by John Gavin, but this has no connection at all with Giraudoux.

OF COURSE IT MAY BE ARGUED that a film, whether good or bad, is a separate exercise and does no harm to the original work, which any reader is free to refer to in its pristine state. This is true, but the fact remains that the film may spread a wrong conception of the book, a vulgarisation or hybridisation, which permanently confuses the issue for those people who are not likely to look carefully, if at all, at the written text. In my view, *The Mad Woman of Chaillot* is anti-propaganda for Giraudoux, who is not such a great writer that he can afford to have his qualities obscured. *Women in Love*, on the other hand, will probably attract readers to the book, but it will muddle the meaning for them in places because, although it is Lawrentian up to a point, it definitely alters certain specific features of the novel and makes some of its ambiguities still more ambiguous. Penelope Mortimer, in her enthusiastic review in the *Observer*, says that the film is absolutely faithful to Lawrence's dialogue. This can only mean that she has forgotten the book. She also declares that the film is a success "on the highest level." I don't think so, but I must add that I don't consider the novel itself, fascinating though it is, as a success on the highest level. It tingles with vitality, but the implications are often difficult to grasp, if not openly self-contradictory. Lawrence is part descriptive genius, part propagandist, and he doesn't seem to be fully in command of the content of his preaching.

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THE SUBJECT-MATTER of the novel can be divided up into roughly two categories: social or class relationships on the one hand, and personal and sexual relationships on the other. There are three main female characters: the sisters, Ursula and Gudrun, respectively a school-mistress and a sculptress, who are the daughters of a handicrafts-teacher, and thus lower middle-class; and Hermione, a rich society woman, who appears to have some of the features of Lady Ottoline Morell. There are two male characters: Birkin, a school-inspector, and Crich, the son of a wealthy mine-owner. In the book it is not made clear how Birkin, Crich and Hermione came together in the first place. It seems strange that Birkin, an elementary schoolboy and moreover an outspoken rebel, should be a close friend of Crich, a public schoolboy and a mining tycoon. Birkin is obviously, to a large extent, Lawrence himself, but then Lawrence was able to rise above his social origins precisely because of his talent as a writer, which Birkin does not have. Stranger still, Birkin, the school-inspector, has for years been Hermione's lover. I was brought up in a mining area where there were several big houses inhabited by aristocrats and upper-class businessmen, but there was absolutely no communication between the local schools and the big houses. The school-inspector had about as much chance of becoming the lover of the lady of the manor as he had of growing wings or finding himself in bed with Greta Garbo. (The gamekeeper or chauffeur had a slightly better chance, because a personal servant was, in a sense, within the charmed circle, and for this reason *Lady Chatterley's Lover* is more plausible.) I never heard of any school-mistress, not even the art-mistress, being invited to take a cup of tea at any of the big houses, let alone spend the week-end there. So I guess that Lawrence is romancing on the basis of the class-mixture in literary society. Unless Nottinghamshire was very different from Northumberland, the class-relationships in the book are not entirely realistic.

But the film makes them still less so. In the novel, Crich senior is a first-generation rich man, who says "Ay" instead of "Yes," and this helps to account for his desire not to lose touch with the workers altogether. In the film, he is a cultured old gentleman. His house, as described in the book, is a first-generation rich house, a converted old farm, not the vast ancestral mansion of the film. The garden party in the book is fairly plausible, because Crich invites to it the local notables, including Hermione and officials from his firm. In the film, he sits patriarchally at the head of a long table occupied entirely by miners in cloth caps swilling beer; this is phoney Old England. Also in the film, Crich junior, although he is a tyrannical tycoon with a mania for efficiency, is shown getting tight in a public-house frequented by the miners and consorting with the local prostitutes. This is absolutely out of keeping with his character in the novel, and totally incredible as class-behaviour. Equally incredible is the scene in which he kisses Gudrun against the wall used by the miners for their sweethearting, with a miner and his lass only a few yards away; this again is not taking place in England, but in Filmland. Mrs. Crich, in the novel, is a neurotic who *day-dreams* about setting the watchdogs on the miners who come up the drive to petition her husband. In the film, she actually releases the mastiffs, which maul the miners. Such behaviour would surely have caused a riot in any mining village.

It may well be that there is an element of literary Gothic in Lawrence's conception of the doomed Crich family: neurosis, mastiffs, fatal accidents, suicides, violent sex, etc. The film, instead of keeping it within bounds, exaggerates it, presumably because this is an easy way of producing cinematographic effects.

The film also introduces quite gratuitous wrong notes into the class-tensions. When Ursula and Gudrun arrive at Hermione's splendid house for the first time, they laugh about her "country cottage" and imply that Birkin is partly attracted to Hermione because of her wealth. In the novel, although they have their reservations about Hermione, they don't laugh at the house but appreciate its beauty, and they make no slighting reference to Birkin. In short, they display good breeding instead of cheap cattiness. Why does Mr. Kramer presume to alter their natures?

THE REAL MEAT OF THE NOVEL is in the personal relationships, and it is here that the film makes its best points and also, at times strays furthest from Lawrence's apparent meaning.

In the book, the two men, Birkin and Crich, are very different from each other, and experience the mutual attraction of opposites. The first is thin, sandy-haired and often "ill" (*i.e.*, tubercular, although the term is not used); the second is a blond, Nordic god, glowing with sexual force, but without enough poetic or philosophical instinct to direct that force, and therefore flawed. The film removes these differences. Alan Bates and Oliver Reed are equally dark, stocky and robust-looking, and in fact they might be brothers rather than opposites. However, there was perhaps no solution to the casting-problem, and certainly the two actors

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give remarkable performances which differentiate between the two characters. Their most significant scene together, the naked wrestling match, is perfectly well-managed in the film, and remains just as strange and poetically ambiguous as it is in the book. It seems to be an expression of Birkin's homosexual attraction to Crich, which Crich is prepared to accept up to a point, but which Birkin himself, for all his outspokenness, cannot quite bring himself to put explicitly into words. Perhaps his hesitation reflects Lawrence's own uncertainty about how far he himself was bisexual and should include homosexuality in his exploration of the lyrical depths of life. It is clear, as the Warden of All Souls pointed out in these pages at the time of the *Lady Chatterley* trial, that he was in favour of heterosexual sodomy as an avenue of approach to the darker mysteries. In the book, there is a definite suggestion that Hermione is Birkin's Dark Lady and Ursula his Fair Lady, and that the former provides him with complicated pleasures of which he is rather ashamed at times, but which he also misses when he is alone with Ursula.

In the novel, although Hermione is an interestingly developed character, she is treated rather unfairly, as if Lawrence were working off some resentment that he is unable to explain fully to himself or to the reader. Birkin accuses Hermione of being too intellectual and narcissistic, yet she is passionately in love with him and her social mannerisms conceal a very elemental woman. When her irritation with his coolness rises to a peak, she hits him over the head with a paperweight, with intent to kill, and this is hardly the act of a thin-blooded woman. We are not told why Birkin and Hermione are now at daggers drawn. The tension between them is realistic but incomprehensible, and eventually Birkin admits to himself that Hermione had some justification for hitting him over the head.

In the film, however, Hermione is turned into a pure figure of fun. Eleanor Bron gives a very amusing sketch of an insufferable, Pre-Raphaelite lady, who does a grotesque Isadora Duncan-like dance that Birkin can't stand. He whispers to the pianist to change to ragtime, and this ruins the effect. It is simply because of her anger at this prank that Hermione hits him with the paperweight. What is more, when Birkin half-heartedly apologises to her as she is sitting on her gilt and satin sofa in her stately ante-chamber, she snarls out the retort: "My arse!" (At least, this is what I think I heard.) Hermione may be erotically complex, but there is no excuse for making her speak like this. In any case, is it remotely conceivable that a pre-1914 society lady would use the expression? Moreover, in the book, when the dance is executed by Ursula and Gudrun, and not by Hermione, Birkin admires it. He likes this kind of improvised lyrical movement. There is no hint that he prefers ragtime, and indeed the probability is that Lawrence looked upon ragtime and popular commercial songs as part of the decadent sophistication of modern society. It is a gross distortion to present him as a modish 1960s figure who would automatically assume that pop is more genuine than self-conscious artistry. Here again, Mr. Kramer or Mr Russell, or both, are taking a very impertinent liberty.

ADMITTEDLY, SOME OF THE most telling scenes in the book can hardly be transferred to the screen, because they depend on animals, which could not be trained to behave as they do in Lawrence's narrative. The relationship between Gudrun and Crich is brought to a head at one point by a vicious rabbit, which Crich dominates with a flick of his virile wrist. Part of Birkin's philosophy of sex is conveyed to Ursula by the off-hand way in which a tom-cat treats a female. But the film does cope quite successfully with two animal episodes. Gudrun, the male-obsessed, male-hating female, dances aggressively in front of a herd of horned, Highland cattle, and eventually compels them to flight, thus symbolising her attitude to Crich, the owner of the cattle. Crich, in return, demonstrates his brash male potency by imposing his will on a horse, while the sisters look on and shiver at the multi-significant drops of blood staining the animal's belly. Although the film doesn't strictly follow the details of the book in either instance, these scenes exactly catch the feel of Lawrence's text. The Lawrentian characters react to each other, and to animals and objects in the external world, with a slightly mad intensity that Ken Russell has perfectly understood and has got the actors to convey. Another astonishingly good scene, which is a long way from the book yet faithful to its spirit, is the luncheon-party where Alan Bates, as Birkin, gives a magnificent recitation of part of Lawrence's poem about the fig, which is put in for the occasion. Perhaps my undoubted irritation with the film comes from the fact that some parts are so good that I would like it all to be on the same level.

THE MORE DIRECTLY EROTIC sequences are not so satisfactory, partly because photographs of erotic postures cannot go very far in expressing the inner, psychological experience and, as I suggested earlier, partly because there is an uncertainty at the centre of the book about

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Lawrence's meaning. The naked wrestling scene is fine, because it is poetic and non-explicit. Birkin tearing off Ursula's underclothes in the grass or Crich and Gudrun rolling around on various beds are frankly boring, because the love-making is conventionalised and general. The beast with two backs is very anonymous, and how can you tell from the outside whether the *étreinte* is being successful or not? Copulation, when dealt with in this way, is just as tedious for the spectator as kissing, and since it crops up in practically every film at the moment, at these points I now find myself looking at my watch to see how much longer we have to go. It would only be interesting if it were genuinely realistic (a scene in *Goodbye Columbus*, for instance, has stuck in my memory, because it was both obscene and funny), but I suppose public taste is still a long way from accepting true realism in these matters and, in any case, the actors would have to go beyond acting and actually live the episode, and this they can hardly be expected to do.

Lawrence suggests that there is good love-making and less good. Ken Russell expresses the good by having Birkin and Ursula float naked (from the waist up) through a dream-like summer meadow. This is about as effective as the firework display which used to be the stock symbol of orgasm. He translates the death or castration element by a jump cut from the naked bodies of Birkin and Ursula to the similar naked tangle of the dead couple in the slime of the emptied lake. This is much more telling, but then negative effects are usually easier to achieve than positive ones. He doesn't —and, given the nature of the book, perhaps cannot—make the sexual relationships finally intelligible or even altogether credible. Why does Birkin remain discontented? What is really wrong with Hermione? (We can drop her, however, because the Hermione of the book is not in the film.) Why does Gudrun prefer the homosexual Loerke to Crich, the beautiful blond god with whom she has so frequently achieved sexual satisfaction? Her behaviour in the last part of the book is very puzzling, even if we suppose that she is a masculine woman, who cannot bear to depend on a man, although she sees that the man is dependent on her. She accuses Crich, quite unjustifiably, of not loving her or of loving her in the wrong way, when in fact it is she who is deliberately wrecking the relationship. She shows some resentment against Crich, because he has not asked her to marry him, yet it seems that she would refuse to marry him, if he did ask. Nor can we say that she is just being stupidly cussed, because she is presented as the most intelligent woman, and perhaps the most intelligent person, in the book. She even appears to be taking over Birkin's role as the author's mouthpiece.

THE ONLY SOLUTION I can propose is that Lawrence does not simply hold the view that good heterosexual sex equals good healthy living. He expounds this view frequently, and it is usually (and I think rightly) taken to be his particular contribution to the 20th-century Anglo-American consciousness. But behind it are other attitudes which he uses in the texture of his books without organising them coherently as a doctrine. He is interested in homosexuality, at least as a possibility, and it is clear that perversions, about which he is never precise, have an attraction for him. Whenever he begins using metaphors of darkness, he seems to be referring to the kind of thing that the pornographers—taking this word in the noblest sense—are interested in, *i.e.*, the use of sexual practices as a means of achieving a state of religious awe, which is well beyond sex as a "natural" function. At this point, the man/woman polarity may fade out altogether, or the two terms may become interchangeable. Possibly, the reason why Birkin and Gudrun—if we are to consider them as separate characters and not simply as a dual projection of one and the same aspiration in Lawrence himself—find Ursula and Crich unsatisfactory is that the latter are sexually "normal," and do not understand, or guess at, the desire to take sex into the second, and truly mystic, phase; they remain on the healthy level of overt Lawrentianism. But Lawrence/Birkin or Lawrence/Gudrun, in his intenser moments, thirsts to go through ordinary sex into a higher (or awesomely lower) form, and beyond that into an ultimate nothingness, which is the extreme state of consciousness. I don't claim fully to understand what this means, although it is the only sense I can make of certain implications in *Women in Love* or in some other works, such as *St. Mawr*. Perhaps Lawrence never tried to think it out; he says it, for instance, then contradicts it, and then says it again, in the long conversation about Loerke between Birkin and Crich towards the end of the novel. However, this sense of a sexual ascesis leading through dark ways to a religious plenitude of emptiness is missing from the film, and no doubt there was no way of putting it in.

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The Spoken Word

Verses, Voices, Vocals — By PATRIC DICKINSON

THOUGH I HAVE seen it written, there is little point in speaking of an "oral tradition that goes back to the ballads," or imagining that the speaking aloud of poetry now has any connection with "Sir Patrick Spens." Just as the medium of all plays in the ancient world and nearly all in Europe was verse, so was the medium of story-telling. Printing finally stopped the voices, but even into the 19th century Scott and Byron kept the narrative tradition alive. But their best-selling stories in verse were read with the eye and the inward ear.

However as early as 1845 Edgar Allan Poe not only printed "The Raven" in the magazine he was editing, he recited it everywhere both in private and public. Even the office-boy in Poe's last job remembered his voice "like a chime of silver bells."

There were—maybe still are—poets who composed orally. Tennyson rumbled his verse to the wind on the great down above Farringford. Housman muttered away as he composed *A Shropshire Lad* on Hampstead Heath. Tennyson was a great reader aloud to private audiences, and apparently with few inhibitions. "Come and let me read you 'Maud,' " he said, "you'll never forget it." There are various accounts of his readings. All agree to his Lincolnshire accent with its long-drawn-out vowels. Like other poets, he liked a drink or so before he began.

> The bottle was brought, and after another drink all round, Tennyson took up *The Idylls of the King*. His reading is a strange monotonous chant, with unexpected falling inflexions, which I cannot describe, but can imitate exactly. It was very impressive. In spite of myself I became very excited as he went on. Finally, when Arthur forgives the Queen, Tennyson's voice broke. I found tears on my cheeks, and Mr. and Mrs. Tennyson were crying one on either side of me.

After his readings, apparently he could comment "There's a wonderful touch," "That's very tender!" or he would stop suddenly in a poem, fix on one listener and ask "How exactly do you understand that?" Tennyson is, I believe, the first poet to be recorded, and even through the thin and primitive crackling of the little revolving cylinder one can get a strong impression both of his tone and accent.

I begin with Poe and Tennyson for many reasons: not particularly because "The Raven" or "Maud" are stories, but because it is possible from thinking of them to ask nearly all the questions I both want to ask and try to answer about the present day.

If you can believe Poe (and that ex-post-facto essay on its composition), he wrote "The Raven" very deliberately. "The Raven has had a great 'run', but I wrote it for the express purpose of 'running'." So here is a question between lasting quality and ephemeral performance. How far is "The Raven" Poe's act and nobody else's? Elizabeth Barrett wrote to him from England:

> Your *Raven* has produced a sensation . . . some of my friends are taken by the fear of it, some by the music. . . . I think you will like to be told that our great poet Mr. Browning was much struck by the rhythm. . . .

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Reference is made in his article to spoken poetry records submitted by ARGO (*"The Poet Speaks"*), LISTEN (*Philip Larkin, Stevie Smith, Robert Graves*), SAGA (*C. Day Lewis, The Ginsbergs at the ICA*), STREAM (*Basil Bunting*), *and* CAEDMON (*Dylan Thomas*).

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E.B.B. never heard Poe speak; so his act is more than a personal appearance. Note also the word "music" cropping up and Mr. Browning being struck by the "rhythm." I shall have more to say about "music" and rhythm; but let me stick to the poet's voice. A young Irish poet says, for instance, how he wishes he could *hear* Wordsworth or Clare or Keats; how he loves Robert Frost and Wallace Stevens; hearing them, "one possesses a poem more intimately..." and "one likes to think the poem belongs to the poet, you know, in a sense, and he has first right on it."

Is this true? A poet publishes his work, to strangers. If his poems are good enough they endure, it may be for centuries. They are read with the eye and the internal voice of countless differing people of differing accents and personal idiosyncracies of speech. Is the poet's own voice of more than just curiosity value? I do not think T. S. Eliot would have said that a poem, once wholly written *and* published, belonged to anyone but its readers. It is essential therefore to examine the idea that Wordsworth's actual voice, or Poe's, or Tennyson's has more to offer than to satisfy curiosity.

"IT HAS BEEN my privilege," Harold Nicolson writes in his urbane and Stracheyan book on *Tennyson* (1923),

> on a very curious and decorative occasion, to edge Miss Ellen Terry into a corner of the Throne Room of Buckingham Palace and to insist, in return for a cup of coffee, on an exact imitation of the Laureate's recitation. The words, I said, did not matter: what I wanted was the tune. She was very gracious; she boomed off at once into the trochaics of "Locksley Hall," swaying increasingly upon the red settee to the motion of the verses, stamping finally with her little feet until the cup upset upon her dress.... And by then I knew exactly how Tennyson recited "Locksley Hall."

Does this really matter? Harold Nicolson makes jolly fun of Tennyson's reading: "his deep bucolic voice... booming and chanting with sudden lifts and with disconcerting hisses and whispers...." When one considers the delicate and intricate rhythms Tennyson used in his finest lyric poems, would it be of advantage to hear them being boomed or imitation-boomed by a great actress? Actors and actresses in their capacity as readers must be considered too. But if it is a criticism that Tennyson boomed—that is, that he read *badly* and did his poems an ill-service—one must say how his, or other poems, should be read *well*, aloud, if read aloud at all.

A slavish imitation of booming—which can equally be called a faithful rendering of the poet's intention (if it is there to hear)—is this the way to speak poetry aloud? Is there a way of leaving the work to speak for itself? "The words did not matter," said Nicolson, "what I wanted was the tune." So whatever Ellen Terry did was bereft of meaning. "She boomed off." But the point is that Nicolson already knew "Locksley Hall" on the page; if he hadn't, the great actress might as well have been vamping Hindu. Maybe she was.

I HOPE that these introductory remarks are not too remote, for although it is thought that a great resurgence of speaking aloud both in public and on disc came out of nowhere about thirty years ago, this is not so. Early in this century John Masefield thought deeply about speech. In the 1920s, he and others organised the Oxford Festival, at which verse was spoken competitively. This sounds awful, and I daresay that it was, but having myself been a judge at its descendant, the English Festival of Spoken Poetry (now defunct), I know more or less what the aim was. It was the speaking aloud by anyone, trained or untrained in voice-production, of various kinds of poem: lyric, dramatic, narrative. The aim was to present the poem. On the whole the poems chosen were poems by the great dead; hence the reader had to interpret the poet. He could neither ask him nor imitate a recording. These "readings," or "speakings," were judged—hence there had to be some canons of judgment.

This is the moment where I must emphasise that *all* spoken language whether in the pulpit, the law-court, the theatre, the political meeting, the lecture and school room, and so on, is a matter of fashion: I mean in its choice of method and of style. No one, now, would set out to preach or make a political speech in the slow, measured, often graceful periods of language that were used even up to 1914.

Consider then, the reading of a Shakespeare sonnet. First we know that the pronunciation of Shakespearean English was different from—from what? (Often it seems that scholars and phoneticians do not allow that Yorkshire Elizabethans spoke as differently from Sussex Elizabethans as they do in 1969.) The vowel sounds were different.

Shall I compare thee to a summer's day?

Try saying it in as many different dialects, or accents, as you know; remembering that Tennyson's eye translated to a Lincolnshire ear, Poe's to a Southern American.

But the poem is there, steadfast against these trivialities. It exists as words in rhythm, possibly form also, but as an entity whose existence and whose meaning depends upon words. We use

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words in the normal course of daily life to communicate with each other our demands, desires, dislikes, gossip, loves, hates. It is the office of language to communicate, that is why there is so much more sympathy with the blind who cannot see but can communicate, gossip, demand love, hate, than with the wholly deaf who cannot. Unless one writes down deliberate nonsense—like Jabberwocky (yet still it is near enough to sense)—language, whether poetry or prose, is to communicate with; hence, it seems to me, all the comparisons with music that poetry has to suffer are nonsense.

I do not agree, therefore, with a poet named Basil Bunting who says:

> Poetry, like music, is to be heard. It deals in sound—long sounds and short sounds, heavy beats and light beats, the tone relation of vowels, the relation of consonants to one another which are like instrumental colour in music.

I do not agree with Herbert Read who wrote of Bunting's poem "Briggflatts": "here is the score of a great oral symphony." (He added that he would like to have a recording. One now exists; and I shall refer to it again.) Poetry is seeking, says Bunting, "to make not meaning, but beauty" and later on there are "lines of sounds drawn in air which stir deep emotions which have not even a name in prose."

> *Shall I compare thee to a summer's day?*
> *Thou art more lovely and more temperate . . .*

Is it conceivable that Shakespeare's aim was not to communicate meaning?

> *Time was away and you were there*

writes MacNeice, and meant exactly that. In bursts of meaning, which he seldom achieved, Dylan Thomas wrote the whole of "Fern Hill," "On the death of Ann Jones," and half a dozen other poems.

So let it be quite clear, poems are nothing whatsoever to do with music; they have no instrumental colour; they are nothing to do with an oral symphony (whatever that could mean); they have no tune. Indeed as Auden slyly says they cannot even be used "as a background noise for study." But it might seem from such different viewpoints as Nicolson and Bunting that poetry was a noise. The words don't matter. Bunting goes further in his horrible analogy: "Music in the stave is no more than instruction to the player. Poetry must be read aloud."

This is muddled thinking indeed but it implies an interpreter—what sort? Is there anything on a page to help an interpreter even in the gross *pp ff* way of hymns A & M? (Vachel Lindsay, in fact, did supply rubrics for his poems.) Is Mr. Bunting to be played on the 'cello, the harp, or spoken—a veritable oral symphony —as Yeats says "The Lake Isle of Innisfree" was, by 1,000 Boy Scouts in the Albert Hall?

POEMS SURVIVE BY WHAT they say, and mean to say, and how they say it. Chaucer knew exactly what "The smiler with the knife under the cloak" meant, and said it that way in iambic rhythm. It wouldn't have been the same in another metre, but it is ponderable whether he was chiefly concerned with tone relations of vowels and consonants. After a pleasing piece of pastiche (Part II of "East Coker") T. S. Eliot continues:

> *That was a way of putting it—not very satisfactory:*
> *A periphrastic study in a worn-out poetical fashion,*
> *Leaving one still with the intolerable wrestle*
> *With words and meanings. The poetry does not matter.*

What does Eliot mean by this last sentence: "the poetry does not matter"? I incline to think by "poetry" he means all the stuff about music and tune and Edith Sitwell's dark pear-shaped vowels—indeed all that turns poetry into a substance as incommunicative and hideous to see or touch as concrete is. "Poetry is seeking to make not meaning, but beauty," says Bunting, at least spelling beauty with a lower case *b*. "The intolerable wrestle with words and meanings," says Eliot. It is a contrast, at least, and a particularly hard one for a reader-aloud to make. Is he to aim to play his single vocal instrument to produce such a beautiful noise as Henry Ainley could, or is he to wrestle with words and meanings so as to present them so clearly and truly to the listening stranger or strangers that "the poetry does not matter"—that is, that if it is poetry at all, it communicates by what it says in the rhythm of how it says what it says and that its meaning becomes clearer and clearer the better the reader-aloud delves into and understands the words and the rhythms?

THE QUESTION THEREFORE is how to communicate a poem aloud, and who should do it. Recently I was re-playing my old 78s of T. S. Eliot reading *The Four Quartets*, and then Robert Speaight's reading. The difference is fascinating. The amateur reads, as most amateurs do, with a small monotonous voice-range, an almost wholly unvaried rhythm and tempo, so that it is hard to tell any one section of a Quartet from any other, and with the prevalent tendency of all amateurs to have a downward inflection at the end of every line. The effect is far from inspiriting. The professional

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is able by means of his training to use a far wider voice range, to vary the rhythms in accordance with the words and because of his breath-control to keep the poem moving, alive, and so (at least to me) far more comprehensible and enjoyable to hear. We know that Eliot and Speaight worked closely together and it is intensely unlikely that he would ever have run counter to the master. In this case Eliot's voice on record may indeed be a curiosity to hear; but is his way of reading his poem useful to a stranger, advantageous, or is it even detrimental? Is Speaight's reading nearer to what the poem is, and nearer to what Eliot *would* have done had he been capable?

No one in the ARGO catalogue of its records of *The Spoken Word* is listed as having directed Speaight. This is most unusual. In his case, being a most sensitive actor, reader, author and one deeply concerned with Eliot, no director was necessary. Usually, however, there *is* one, who may meddle with the poem for good or ill. First of all, though, it is necessary to consider this "professional." (I shall use the word actor or reader to include both sexes.)

In the first place he has been trained to speak, to use his voice as an instrument. This does not give him, *ipso facto*, the ability to speak poetry, though many actors and some directors seem to think so. Speaking poetry is really the antithesis of acting, for a poem is not like a "part" in a play. There are roughly two kinds of actor—those who subdue every part they play to their own personality and those who aim to lose themselves in each part. It might seem that the latter aim is like the reading of a poem; yet it is not. It is true that a poem is a whole, an entity, but it has no "character"; its vitality is quite unlike that of Hamlet or Hedda Gabler. A poem is almost impersonal, and once it is in being it demands no embellishment. An actor "puts" something of body, presence, movement and personality into a part in order to create a living being on stage: this duality is inescapable. A poem is utterly different. It is complete. There is nothing to "put" into it. It asks of its reader only a minute quantum of personality. Where many actors go astray is exactly in not realising this impervious completeness in a poem. So they over-emphasise words at the expense of rhythm.

Will no one tell me what she sings?

—making quite sure we will not miss the point, and by messing up the rhythm making quite sure that we do. So, someone may say, we are really back to the small voice-range, the monotony. No. An actor who has understood—like Speaight, Marius Goring, or Flora Robson—that reading poetry is another facet of their art will not over-emphasise, nor drop line endings. There are plenty of younger ones, too, such as Gary Watson or Patrick Garland. (Lists are invidious so I shall make no more.) What the professional reader aims at, above all, is to find the overall rhythm of a poem, not only verse by verse, if it is in a strict form. This means to find its shape, what it has to say, and by doing so, allow its whole composite meaning freedom to communicate. There is no one absolute meaning for any poem. What the good reader allows is for the poem to speak for itself. This is not so difficult in a narrative poem like *The Lay of the Last Minstrel* or Byron's *Don Juan*. It is intensely difficult for the myriad lyric poems spoken in halls, on broadcast microphones, and *LP* records nowadays.

TEMPO, RHYTHM, VOICE. What kind of voice? Almost all English actors have the same kind of speech. It is taught in drama schools and loosely it conforms to the noises, particularly vowel-noises, made by the English middle-to-upper-middle classes. There are eleven of these sounds, but only one or two flash signals of class-distinction. This kind of accent pervades the theatre, the BBC (TV and Sound), and once it even used to pervade the New York theatre. We all know what it sounds like.

As to the speaking of poetry one has to say that professionally this is pretty well as exact as the tuning of a violin: it is an exact and executive instrument. I see nothing wrong in this. Command of his instrument, skill and precision in its use, denote a professional; but he must know what he is speaking about. There is no reason to exclude regional accents such as John Laurie's, Richard Burton's, or Wilfred Pickles' —so long as the proviso "he must know what he is speaking about" is valid.

So the professional reader must needs understand—apart from what the director tells him—something about the poem; he must know *what* to communicate. It is still a question, in using professionals, as to who knows what is being done well or badly, since there are no such standards, either for the public or the critic, to judge by as there are in music. Musicians mostly need a conductor, and the differences between a performance conducted by Toscanini or Klemperer are manifest. But this is a false analogy, since readers perform solo. Their performance may often be directed, and being professional they do what their directors tell them. So these directors, American and English, know *how* poetry should be spoken? There is no set of rules. Some actors seem to read like a 19th-century ham imitation Sir Frank Benson, others like a 20th-century ham imitation Sir Donald Wolfit. Others seem to have grasped the principle of natural speech and to have laid for ever the

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bogy called "the poetry voice." These are matters of fashion, and I doubt if Tennyson would be moved to tears by Gary Watson's reading of "Maud."

WHAT IS NECESSARY to establish is this. In the last twenty-five years or so, very tentatively, a *style* of reading poetry has made headway for professionals and their directors in England. This derives largely from the insistence that reading is not acting. This idea of natural speech rather than declamation owes much to sound-broadcasting where the distance from reader to hearer is only about four to six feet and the reader is invisible. I can put myself down as both a champion, a proselyte, and practitioner of this effort to achieve a style: for without one it is impossible to deviate.

However, it is one particular method; an attempt at a definitive method, knowing perfectly well that Wyatt or Donne or Pope *themselves* did not speak like that, and not caring about this, for the point is the poem, not the poet. Using a first-rate professional reader one is sure that once the poem has been fully explored the rendering of it will not change—it will have its own stake in the permanence of the poem itself. At the microphone or in the concert hall or theatre one has no qualms for the reading of a properly rehearsed professional, only the sadness anyone feels in a theatre, "I shall never hear or see that again. . . ."

With the widespread use of tape-recording this is changed. The feeling of sadness comes from another quarter: "*Must* this be preserved?"—So I come back to Mr. Heaney wanting to hear the *voice* of Clare; and I ask, how often would he listen to Clare's voice in comparison with a really good professional reading (there isn't one I know of) that offered the *poems* of Clare?

THERE IS A GREAT DEAL to be said against the standardisation of our spoken language. I would never, myself, wish to stifle dialect or accent. But in hearing a poem spoken aloud, one does not want the speaker's dialect or accent to be obtrusive, one does not want particularly to *notice* who is reading. Which does one prefer: the remark, "What a magnificent poem—who read it?" Or, "What a magnificent reader—whose poem was it?" It is my contention that only the great professional readers can offer the supreme virtue of being humble before the poem and its author, and though I would hardly like Anthony Quayle (a fine reader) to read Burns, I would prefer that to some ranting Scottie whose idea of Burns was his own last memory of himself at Hogmanay! The question of the ephemeral and the permanent exercises—or should exercise—anyone concerned in the public presentation of poetry by means of the voice. "Voices assail the Word," as Eliot has written in a religious context. The words are equally true in a poetical context. Darkling I listen. And when I hear the poets themselves I am often in love with an easeful silence, for unlike the professionals they seem so often more than half in love with the easeful death of their verses, and if they could only cease upon the *LP* with no pain, I would bless them.

THE RECORDING OF POEMS, even of poets, dates back many years, but it was always fairly haphazard. Indeed, I possess an aged 78 of the actor Ion Swinley reading Gray's "Elegy" in a real old-fashioned actory way, preceded and concluded on the disc with the ringing of Stoke Poges church bell. I myself directed for the British Council a number of 78s of what I would like to call standard readings of classic poets such as Chaucer, Donne, or Browning. The advent of the *LP* outmoded these—technically for the better but I am not at all sure that the *LP is* a better medium. With a 78 you were confined to 4 minutes 30 seconds a side. Naturally in this time one cannot read "The Rape of the Lock," but suppose one has four sonnets, each with a blank band between, it was far easier to "spot" any one. With the *LP*'s micro-groove and lightweight pick-up it is very difficult to "spot" one poem on a side which may have 12 bands and plays for 20 minutes. One may not *want* to sit and listen to the lot, every time. This may not be a crippling disadvantage but it can certainly lead to boredom and scrapes on the disc.

I do not think the makers of *LP* poetry-records have really come to terms with the permanence of what they make. The recording of music has a longer history of perfectionism. If the first violin knocks over his music-stand, there has to be another "take." The final recording is as near as possible musically flawless—not only because this is artistically desirable, but because the makers know the record has to stand up to endless repetition. In the concert hall the upsetting of a music-stand is one temporary disruption soon forgotten. Does one want to hear it every time the disc is played? I make this point for, in the ARGO series of *LP* classics, directed by Mr. George Rylands for the British Council, however much one may dislike the style of some of the readers they do not cough, fluff, shuffle their scripts and so forth.

It is a different kettle of fish when it comes to the amateurs—the poets reading their own poems—for only too often you hear not only

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the poet, but the kettle and the fish too. This is supposed to offer an aid of spontaneity, and so it does—once.

I have suggested that there is no particular importance attached to poets reading their own poems, but there is a great vogue for this and certainly the untrained voices provide differences from the actor/reader. Robert Graves thinks that

> If a poet, called upon to read his poems, chants or croons or declaims, something is wrong. A true poem is best spoken in a level natural voice: slowly or solemnly, and with suppressed emotion, but in a natural voice.

It is difficult to see how one can reconcile a natural voice, the voice one uses daily, with being slow and solemn and full of suppressed emotion. Try asking for a pint of bitter slowly and solemnly, etc. But whatever Graves *means* he actually *speaks* his poems in a dry staccato and flat voice, like a senior Civil Servant dictating a memo. It may be, though, that like most people, even now, Graves hears the voice of Graves as it sounds in the sounding-box of his head. I cannot emphasise too strongly that nobody in the world hears the speaker's voice as he himself hears it. Until the advent of recording nobody ever did. Now it *is* possible to hear what you sound like to other people. I am sure that a lot of the misapprehensions poets have, come from this simple inescapable fact. (Once an old barnstormer like Dylan Thomas had *heard* himself, he laid it on thicker and thicker.)

Philip Larkin, on two *LPs*, has recorded *all* the poems in his two books *The Less Deceived* (1964) and *The Whitsun Weddings* (1966): an awesome thought. To repeat, it is far easier to go to one's shelf, pick out the books and read a poem or so than it is to "spot" these discs—there are fifteen poems on Side I alone. Does one want even these fifteen poems running? Larkin doesn't think much of reading aloud, and certainly these discs enhance his opinion, but he has the idea that "the reading of a poem by its author can be helpful; you can hear where he puts the stresses, whether he sounds ironic, or flippant or serious."

If this is not apparent in the poem, surely it is a weakness in the writing, which no personal rendering can counteract. It is a common failing of many poets reading aloud that they are not so much reading aloud as explaining aloud, justifying aloud. In Larkin's case this is not necessary, and in any case his lugubrious delivery with its inevitable dying falls and its inexorably Coventry accent simply does not do what he seems to think he has done. His

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attempts at "irony" or "flippancy" or "seriousness" are better done by a first-term dramatic student after a lesson or so. After listening to Larkin, whose poetry I have enjoyed since it appeared, I feel like quoting Stevie Smith:

These thoughts are depressing I know. They are depressing,
I wish I was more cheerful, it is more pleasant,
Also it is a duty....

I have always thought that, procreatively, *"Duty, Stern daughter of the voice of God"* would be difficult to explain, but I suppose that if one wants to hear the voice of God one could do worse than listen to Dylan Thomas. Unluckily it is only the last of Thomas that we have on disc. In the period 1945–48 I directed him often at the BBC both reading his own poems, taking part in Vernon Watkins' *Ballad of the Mari Lwyd*, and in my *"Time for Verse"* programmes, in one of which he read Thomas Campbell's "Battle of the Baltic" superbly—and asked me, seriously, if the poet was "a relation of Roy's." Later on, as we know, he bashed the bottle and the bible increasingly and his readings were dominated by his lack of breath—hence the slow and oracular noise, and the audible intakes. But should these platform performances—or a night with the Ginsbergs at the I.C.A., audience participation and all—be put on record (or, at any rate, at such length)?

ANOTHER ASPECT of the *LP*-poet boom is that in between poems the poets record chatty, arch, silly, banal and sometimes (but seldom) serious remarks about their work. *The Poet Speaks*, another series propagated by the British Council, includes these fill-ups which I believe are said to help students. Again it seems to me that the accent is on the ephemeral. What fascinates me most is those poets whose voices change from the natural in chat to something else when they come to speak their poems. Louis MacNeice reads as he spoke. Vernon Watkins reads with a hushed reverence for his *oeuvre*. Norman Nicholson is a gay lively communicator; the Rev. R. S. Thomas, author of all those austere Welsh poems, speaks in the voice of a Brighton curate. (Yes, Mr. Heaney, hearing poets' voices cuts both ways). On the whole, most of the poets speak as if their poems didn't belong to them, except real performers like Ginsberg and Stevie Smith—but no one can imitate Stevie Smith, or should wish to.

The Scottish poets? This must bring up the question of the quality of the poetry which it is not primarily my business to discuss. MacDiarmid, Goodsir Smith, MacCaig, Crichton Smith—all suffer a pompous voice-change between the chat and the poetry. I suspect a Scottish "poetry voice"—a thought which fills me with gloom, if Duncan Macintyre, John Laurie, and Bryden Murdoch were not there to offer professional assistance. Let's come back to the voice, the accent, the rhythm. Auden's only concession to American citizenship is to say last instead of *larst*—his rhythms remain those of English speech.

The only well-known semi-pro performer among poets is C. Day-Lewis. He enunciates with a broth of Irish, but the poems he writes, and also speaks—say, in the manner of Thomas Hardy—are not in the rhythms even of Anglo-Irish, such as Yeats used. But Day-Lewis' own poems can be spoken in any sort of English, because their rhythms *are* English. I do not know how the grotesque Northumbrian of Basil Bunting would fare—this "oral symphony" which he, in reading, plays on a one-stringed-fiddle with the same tone, tempo, and rhythm whatever is happening—if it were read by Day-Lewis, Gary Watson, or John Gielgud. Someone, sometime, someone else will have to sing *Peter Grimes*. Is he slavishly to copy the recordings of Peter Pears? What would he do if no recordings existed? He would go to the score. I think any potential reader should go to the page, rather than to the charming eccentric readings of a Betjeman or a William Empson, and the recordings of them. These recordings have their historical use as an adjunct to books. I do not think they either supersede or nullify the printed work, nor should be used by embryo thesis-mongers or anyone who thinks they offer more than two things. One: "Ah, this is what he sounded like." Two: "This is how he, however imperfectly, spoke his verse." To reduce a poem to such proportions is nonsense.

WHAT IS THE POINT of all this reading activity? Is it to be an adjunct, or is it to supply, at the same, or a greater, cost, a generation which has ceased to be able to read? Who thinks one 80-minute run-through of Larkin obviates the necessity of reading his books? I use this example deliberately since Larkin is a University Librarian. Are these recordings of poets so well known to the English public as to supersede the publication of their books? The cost is no less, and also implies the expensive possession of a good record-player.

Is the point educational? In this case the Education Authority supplies the record-player and the discs (at the expense of people who may hate poetry). Some recordings, if they happen to fill an *O*-level or *A*-level need, can allow a teacher a lot of time spent. But if the poem, or poet, set for the examination is available on

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record; if he says something as silly as that Jude (Hardy: *Jude the Obscure*) "is working his sexual place," or that the private sexual parts of girls are "radiant national deposits," what is the teacher to do in face of this dear old idea of the poet as intelligent bard? Suppose there is a question on contemporary Russian poetry and the pupil has heard of "Yevtushenko talking like the Chamber of Commerce in Washington," will he and 100,000 others reproduce this dotty dictum because they heard it said by a poet? If this were vision-and-sound I would have little hope. As it is only sound, the children may doze in visions of TV-stars and simply not listen. But the teacher will have heard and will have mugged up walloping words like "oral symphony" and the inter-tonalities of vowels and consonants, and even something so idiotic as a poet who "tells us something we can hear if we brush our hair and open our eyes and sit still for a moment."

This is a speculation on educational values which applies less to any ARGO series than to whole discfuls of Graves, or Bunting. So like Wordsworth, I must think, do all I can, that there was pleasure there. Sometimes it takes a bit of doing, but one must presume that the poets have recorded their works not only for instruction but for entertainment, though few are as honest as John Betjeman who says, "Entertaining—that is all I consider my verse to be." He also says, "I don't think you have to be very cultured to enjoy rhythm." How true—yet how few poets reading aloud can convey a sense of enjoyment, for all their getting the stresses in the right places. Empson can, and Norman Nicholson, Dylan Thomas, Stevie Smith. Even if it isn't my business here to criticise the quality of the poems, it is necessary to say that a good reader can deceive one into thinking the poems far better than they are. Though I never heard him, I am told that John Drinkwater's recitals were spell-binding. Certainly Humbert Wolfe read his poems brilliantly. Neither poet is now considered worth critical attention. Walter de la Mare read poorly and so tentatively as to seem off-hand, but even if he is out of fashion few discerning readers would question the worth or durability of his work. I do not believe that reading a poem aloud is an infallible test of its quality, nor indeed that all poetry *should* be read aloud, though to have it done so can be extremely pleasurable. It can also be stultifying or downright excruciating. Philip Larkin, listening to himself, remarks: "I think generally speaking I read very fast, comparatively, and sometimes too fast." Not to me, for one. But if so, on listening to the playback of his recording, why not do it again more slowly? However, he likes his own versions; and his interviewer does not think a professional reader could follow every shade of meaning and variation of emotion. As a director both of amateur and professional readers I must disagree. However, it is not easy to establish the tempo of a poem. But do it one must, and to do so is to work into the rhythm of the poem. I do not agree with Francis Berry that if a poet writes for his own voice he is necessarily the best reader, but I think it is unquestionable that the study of a poet *can* establish his tempo—*i.e.*, that Wordsworth's tempo is slow and Shelley's is quick. This is discoverable, crudely, by trying to read Wordsworth very fast and Shelley very slowly. A director can be more subtle than that. What I believe is not so widely appreciated is the relationship of the *poet's* general tempo to the *reader's* or *listener's*—*i.e.*, a slow-speaker may naturally gravitate to a Wordsworth and instinctively dislike a Shelley. In directing a reader the director has to take arbitrary decisions as to tempo which, of course, affects rhythm, and so meaning. There is no reason to suppose that a professional reader need be left to "ham a bit they don't understand." Nor do I think that Peter Orr, of the British Council, who has so successfully directed so many poets, leaves poets entirely in the dark as to their own performances.

The Conflict of Generations

LEWIS S. FEUER

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The aim is clarity of communication to the stranger, not an orgy of self-love for the poet.

"I think generally speaking I read very fast, comparatively . . ."—comparatively with whom, or what idea of speaking verse? Such a remark is chilling, or ought to be, to anyone involved in having *other* people (poets or readers) speak at all.

Should they? There are obvious limitations to the speaking aloud of lyric verse. Ballads, narratives, do not rely very often on intricate verse-forms so that the necessity to show that a poem is in a particular form, and no other, does not arise. In lyric, the words on the page, say George Herbert's, Dylan Thomas', or the enchanting aberrations of E. E. Cummings, make a point it is simply impossible to illustrate with the voice. The hundreds of years of visual reading are indeed being undone rapidly, and I suppose it will not be long before you plug in to an audio-poetolab, and get a digest *Paradise Lost* in 29 minutes. Someone, however, will still have to speak the travesty.

THE ALBERT HALL "HAPPENING" and the recent Festival Hall 60th anniversary of the founding of the Poetry Society, the recitals of the Barrow Poets, or the Apollo Society, illustrate perfectly the muddle there is about speaking poetry aloud, if it is "poetry" that is spoken at all.

> *The old order changeth, yielding place to new,*
> *Lest one good custom should corrupt the world. . . .*

It is likely that after the word "new" Tennyson assumed his reader to supply the word "order" = new order. There are, at present, only various kinds of disorder. Even the election of a new Professor of Poetry at Oxford is turned into a dismal sort of variety act. What order can be made out of so many phonies and cacophonies?

In 1934, I bought Dylan Thomas' *Twenty-Five Poems* for half-a-crown. The ARGO records, at about 16 times the price, supply the texts of the out-of-copyright dead. Are records, broadcasts, or live recitals in halls, the prelude and inducement to reading, or an end in themselves, leaving the books untaken from the bookseller's shelf or the library? It may be that a new kind of *jongleur* is emerging, whose performances are wholly oral, though it must be remembered that his original medieval repertoire was not of his own works. The ballad-singer, like the professional reader, was basically an interpreter, not a creator. Scholars' quarrels about Homer sufficiently illuminate this.

Nor, indeed, do we need to be "very cultured" to enjoy rhythm—anyway the coarser forms of rhythm. It is fruitful to compare Ewan MacColl's "Ballad of John Axon" from *Poetry and Jazz in Concert*; Richard Burton's "Ancient Mariner"; and William Plomer's fraught reading of his own poem "At the Supermarket."

It is improbable that any of these have a relationship with "Hugh of Lincoln" or "Lord Randal." This new disorder of speaking aloud, on disc, platform, or at the microphone, *is* very new. The dangers I see are clearly in the cult of the Poet-himself-and-none-other, and in the soft lack of thought behind so many issues of recordings which sometimes, it seems to me, imply a hard philistine application of thought to sales rather than aesthetics.

The cracked bell of a *Times* third leader (25 January 1969) tolls us where we are not.

> The poet is tempted to read only the sure-fire material—the poems which are certain to make his auditors laugh or cry, but especially laugh. He begins to posture in the mirror which is so flatteringly held up to him. A poet on the platform can become popular far beyond his deserts.

What are these deserts? A good review in the *TLS*? *The Times* continues, "Yet surely, all things considered, the situation is healthier now for modern poetry than it has been for many years? A sickly, precious minority art has been transformed into something robust and vigorous. The maker of verses again has fire in his belly." We are told, too, that "poetry reaches us most easily in the person of the poet. The audience needs his physical presence: indeed it almost seems to need direct physical contact with him in order to understand." To understand what? And does one kick him or kiss him to get this? Does a composer face such vulgar indignities at a first performance, or a painter at his private view?

What a pretentious and despicable argument this is! But it is what poets have to put up with, vocal or silent; I quote it because it leaves one speechless, which is different from silent; and because it leaves one, also, pondering about this "sickly, precious minority art" in terms of what it is. One could apply the three adjectives to leader-writing for *The Times*, but the noun "art" would hardly do. Consider how you would speak aloud Landor's epigram.

> *I strove with none; for none was worth my strife;*
> *Nature I loved, and, next to nature, Art;*
> *I warmed both hands before the fire of life;*
> *It sinks, and I am ready to depart.*

In all their various ways poets are making up the fires of life, whatever is in their bellies. It is the readers and audiences who get the benefit, and too often the poets who burn themselves out.

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The Advisor

I advise you: pander to proof, live out your youth
In the slovenly ambiguity of truth.
From the leaves of avenues the stone gods gaze
On the reminiscent incline of your days.
As your days are in the environs of night
The place where each avenue turns out of sight
Concerns you, and is all your concern. And in sleep
Along the ocean's verge the soft surge of the deep
Scatters spars and debris and the wrecks of dreams,
Mute violent shapes that were the boards and beams,
And your lost belongings. The sea wears out dreams.
Watch; the hulk of certainty is turning into stone.
Do you even recognize these strange shapes as your own?
I was certain once. Now I know resignation,
And the breeze of perception from the sea of madness.
I was certain once and now imagination
Is one raindrop on the savanna of sadness.

Be advised: appreciate joy and grief
Through exhaustive microscopes of belief;
And in the crises of inconstancy invent
Structures where the proud perceptions can be bent
In the tortuous curvature of constancy.
I am exultant: why should I believe
In the glare of the day's dull constancy?
My heated thoughts are brushed by night's soft sleeve.
Dare blind men believe in what they can perceive?
A child with a fine imagination
Sits on a fence, lobs a stone in the air,
And there goes truth and its fascination,
Aimed at nothing and sent into nowhere.
But as it's in flight targets cluster his gaze.
Truth bristles in them. He knows truth's tricky ways.
And there in the grass truth keeps its assignation
With the accurate stone of his imagination.

I also advise you: in the stale season,
Put on your homburg, listen to reason.
Go reasonably through the Autumn wood,
Walk through the leaves as if you understood.
But me, I think senselessness has begun,
The air is heavy with resignation.
Reason is just the prodigal son
Of the house of imagination;
Disdained the lineage; now at dead-end,
Finds he is a chip off the fine old block.
Reason comes home, worn-out, without a friend,
The hills of distant gold were made of rock.
Yet perception gives us the ground to agree.
Perception is this breeze. It confirms that we
Have travelled in each other's dreams, and felt the spray
Of a great hope. I can hear that pounding sea
At the distant edges of this silent day.

Nicholas Snowden Willey

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Language as Movement

By Anthony Burgess

I HAVE BEEN living for the past year in a community in which English, when it is spoken at all, is spoken very much as a second, or even third, language. I spend much of the day trying to write English but little of the time talking it. The English I do talk is, as I'm well aware, somewhate different from what I used to speak when I lived in England. At its lowest level, a mere instrument for making subsistence requests or imparting basic information, it is a sort of *sabir*, a Mediterranean pidgin. At its highest level, it admits Maltese and Italian words and approaches now Rome now Valletta in its intonations and, occasionally, its phonemes. When a British voice comes through from England or the British Council on the telephone, it is a shock to hear those passionless intonations and the lavish use of that *schwa* which the Mediterranean mouth doesn't know. I think in the future I shall be even more cut off from the spoken English of the British than I am already, though my written English will not become noticeably more exotic. I am slowly joining (or returning to, since I was brought up on a provincial dialect) the great company of the non-metropolitan English-speakers. I kept clear of this body when I was a colonial officer in Malaya and Borneo: a member of the *raj* had to wear his pseudo-patrician accent as he wore his tie or his white tuxedo. Now I am free to develop whatever exilic idiolect I find convenient.

I feel myself to be no longer involved in the minor changes that are taking place in the English language—if by the English language is meant the medium of "normal conversation of people living in Greater London and south-east England." Professor Simeon Potter still, rightly, thinks of the "received pronunciation" —or *RP*—of British English as residing in that area which contains Oxford, Cambridge, Eton, Harrow, Broadcasting House and the Wood Green TV Centre. The speech of Liverpool is comic or endearing, but it is not to be taken seriously. To pronounce *bath* with a short front /*a*/ does not qualify one for a BBC announcer's job and it might get in the way of total audience attention if one were addressing the Royal Society. This only applies, needless to say, if one is an Englishman. Scots, Irishmen, Americans, Canadians, South Africans, and Australasians may estabish their own *RP*s, and these must be accorded the respect due to independent foreign languages; but Manchester and Bristol speech are provincial and unacceptable in the *serious activities* of the big city.

To indicate the changes that are taking place in the "Ukasian" (Christine Brooke-Rose's coinage) *RP*, it is necessary to use the symbols of some such alphabet as that of the International Phonetic Association, and not all printing-houses possess these, nor can many readers read them. This is a pity. As long ago as 1912, when Bernard Shaw wanted to notate the favourite vowel of Eliza Doolittle, the average reader was not willing to put up with the upside-down *e* which phoneticians use to represent it. And yet the ordinary alphabet has no letter for it, perhaps the commonest vowel in the English language. It has to borrow letters associated with quite different sounds—*a* in *ago*, *e* in *father*, *o* in *a cup of tea*. Anyway, this "neutral *schwa*" is tending, in London English, to replace the vowel in words like *cut*, *some*, *summer*, according to Professor Potter. The fact that the average London speaker of English cannot *see* the sound (as he can see the ee of *see* or the a of *bath*) may make him, if he is interested, which he probably isn't, deny this. But it is happening, nonetheless.

A LOT OF CHANGES are happening. At the end of *see* and *tea* you can hear the semi-vowel *y* as in *yes*; at the end of *blue* and *two* there is a quite clear *w* (non-phoneticians will be more disposed to hear it if *blue* appears as its homophone *blew*). *Saw* and *sore* are increasingly being treated as homophones. The *a* in words like *man*, *bad*, *bag*, *jam* (that is, short front *a* before a voiced consonant) is increasing in length,

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approaching some varieties of American pronunciation. Professor Potter invites us to say slowly "Scott was not a bad bard." In the old days, *bad* and *bard* were distinguishable by length as well as quality; nowadays—and laboratory tests prove this—there is very little difference in the time taken to produce each vowel. "Under American influence the tendency to lengthen short vowels is increasing," so that *beauties* and *cities* are developing a sizeable vowel in their final syllables—not just the tongue-flick we knew when we were children.

The diphthong in *late* and *straight* is changing. The makeup of this double sound is best seen in *eight* and *weight*, which accurately show it as an *e* gliding towards an *i*. The *e* has traditionally been a high one, like the *é* in French *thé* and *café*, but now it is closer to the e in *bet* and *dead* in the speech of a number of people who are neither South Africans nor Cockneys. Diphthongs like those heard in *arduous* and *endure* are making their final element (that neutral *schwa* again) syllabic, so that we frequently hear something like *ardu-ous* and *indu-re*. The semi-vowel *y* in words like *illumine* (traditionally *illyumine*) is disappearing. There is a distinct difference in the ways the older and the younger generations say "Absolute power corrupts absolutely." With the latter, says Professor Potter, *loot* has taken the place of *lute*. That important root *lun-* as in *lunar* and *lunonaut* is increasingly heard as *loon-*. "This is obviously the pronunciation of tomorrow."

As for consonants, there is an increasing tendency to pronounce *warmth* as *warmpth*, *sense* as *sents*, and *length* as *lengkth*—in other words, in moving from a nose-sound (*m*, *n*, *ng*) to a voiceless sound made by rubbing two parts of the mouth together, an "homorganic buccal plosive" is finding a split-second way in. The final voiced consonants *b*, *d*, *g* in words like *grab*, *bad* and *dog* are losing some of their voice (or vibration of the vocal cords) and approaching, though not reaching, their unvoiced equivalents *p*, *t* and *k*. The medial *t* in *letter*, *better*, *matter* is either taking on a slight voiced quality, in the American manner (not quite *ledder*, but moving towards it) or else losing its toothy force and turning into a glottal stop. "Let us hope that it is only a passing phase," says Professor Potter, making a rather unscientific value-judgment.

And so on and so on. Does all this matter, madder, or ma"er? The average literate person will say no: that is specialist stuff, probably cranky. There is still a powerful resistance on the part even of professional word-users—

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novelists, for instance—to understanding the quiddity of their raw material. This last summer I spent a little time with an "advanced creative writing" group in an American Institute in Deyá, Mallorca, and was perhaps more surprised than I should have been by the frank hostility of the students to my attempt to make them look closely at a word, examining its phonemic and morphemic structure and considering its possible range of meanings. Perhaps, to be charitable, the hostility sprang out of an unwillingness to face the essential instability of language: builders presumably like to believe in the solidity of their bricks. And, more than this, the man who sets himself the task of "controlling" language by making books out of it, doesn't like to be told that the changes that take place in language take place behind his back: the medium with which we try to make the unconscious conscious itself obeys unconscious laws.

Leave phonemes and look at linguistic changes that require no specialist symbols for their representation. Take the definite article, which is not so popular as it was when people spoke of *the measles* and *the Euston Station*. We hear less of *the Government* and more of plain *Government*; one goes to *university* and not to *the university*, *New Statesman*, *Spectator*, *Radio Times* are articleless; *The Queen*, which sounded old-fashioned, is now *Queen*, which sounds chic, naughty, even epicene. The English definite article was always a bit otiose. Lancashire, like Russia, gets on well without it: "dog's on chair and cat's on table." *The* only takes on meaning when the advertisements use it to express unique excellence: "*Mustavit*—THE *sauce*." Newspaper headlines help along its growing otiosity.

And the same headlines are habituating us to nominal groups, or statements made solely out of nouns, which Henry James, let alone Dr. Johnson, would have found unintelligible. "You can date a passage" (Professor Potter quotes Lord Dunsany as saying) "by the frequency of multiple nouns and so can record our language decay progress." Is it really decay? Even an overloaded headline like this, Professor Potter's composition, has a ghastly indigestible solidity which suits the age: RAILWAY STATION WAITING ROOM MURDER INQUIRY VERDICT CHALLENGE.

The tendency to shed the unnecessary—seemingly contradicted by the parallel growth of gobbledygook—is having its effect on what might be termed paraorthography: we're learning to shed inessential punctuation. A man who was listed in a yearbook (not year-book) as Albert Fothergill, O.B.E., M.A., Ph.D., F.R.S.L., is now Albert Fothergill OBE MA PhD FRSL. Earl's Court has become Earls Court. In 1964, when Kingston-on-Thames and Richmond-on-Thames became Greater London Boroughs, they lost their hyphens without anyone remarking on it. At the same time, Shakespeare celebrated his quatercentenary by having been born in Stratford upon Avon: nobody wrote to *Times* (as it will soon be called about wanton dehyphenisation.

PROFESSOR POTTER'S BOOK[1] is a stimulating reminder of that inner dynamism of language which functions with apparent autonomy. It is a new addition to the André Deutsch Language Library (of which Professor Potter and Eric Partridge are joint editors), and it comes out at the same time as another book in the series which, on the surface, has little to say to merely amateur students of English, nor, for that matter, much apparent relevance to contemporary linguistic problems. It is *Tudor to Augustan English*, by A. C. Partridge[2] of the University of the Witswatersrand, and it deals with the changes in English syntax and usage that took place in the three centuries from 1485. The general interest of the work, as well as the contemporary relevance, turn out to be quite considerable. The middle phase of that period in which New English (not Old, Middle, or Modern) was used—1590 to 1625, the age of Shakespeare and Ben Jonson—had problems somewhat similar to our own. There was the business of shedding old forms, of knowing how far to go with new ones. There was the agony of finding a literary style.

In the eighteenth century it was possible for any literate man to sit down and turn out a few elegant paragraphs. There was a large stockpot of stylistic conventions in the languages of all the arts, and it was no shame to work (as Mozart did) within set limits, employing accepted tags and cadences. Our own age and the age of Shakespeare are alike in that every writer must try to create his own style, and there is nobody to tell him what he may not do. At one extreme there is bubbling unedited colloquial; at the other there is the contrived Euphuism of Lyly or Lawrence Durrell. What is the young writer to take as his model? Shakespeare found his own voice through something approaching parody not only of Lyly (whose *Euphues* appeared when Shakespeare was fifteen) and imitators of Seneca, but also of the *potential* eccentricities of English itself. Abstract the genius from Shakespeare, and some of his inventions sound demented—"the princes orgulous," indeed; "the multitudinous seas incarnardine," for God's sake.

[1] *Changing English*. By SIMEON POTTER. André Deutsch, 30s.

[2] *Tudor to Augustan English*. By A. C. PARTRIDGE. André Deutsch, 36s.

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Nobody reads *Euphues* nowadays. In its own day it soon became synonymous with affected artifice; nowadays "Euphuistic" is a pejorative term. But without Euphuism Shakespeare could not have done this:

> Harrie, I doe not onelie maruaile where thou spendest thy time, but also how thou art accompanied. For though the cammomill, the more it is troden on the faster it growes: so youth the more it is wasted, the sooner it weares:. . . If then thou bee sonne to mee, heere lies the poynt, why beeing sonne to me, art thou so pointed at? . . . There is a thing Harry, which thou hast often heard of, and it is knowne to many in our land by the name of pitch. This pitch (as ancient writers do report) doth defile, so doth the companie thou keepest: for Harrie, now I do not speake to thee in drinke, but in teares; not in pleasure but in passion: not in words onely, but in woes also. . . .

And without the stylistic excesses and insufficiencies of several centuries of writing, neither *Ulysses* nor *Finnegans Wake* could have been written. But neither a Joyce nor a Shakespeare can solve the stylistic problems of lesser talents.

Meanwhile, a very much lesser talent myself, I rely on such books as those of Professor Potter and Professor Partridge to remind me that English is a mercurial element and that style is only a necessarily failed device for making the mercury feel, as well as look, argentine. To be exiled is helpful to the writer. He is not likely to be influenced by the kinds of English he hears about him—that of the retired admiral and that of the U.K.-educated colonial. He is able to regard the smart inness of the British colour supplements as not merely remote but transitory. There remains something in between—the movements that the philologists record. The managing of these is the job of literature, however minor.

Alexandre Koyré & the History of Science

On an Intellectual Revolution — By THOMAS S. KUHN

OUTSIDE OF THE SCIENCES, few fields of scholarship have been so transformed in the past thirty years as the historical study of scientific development. That transformation continues, proceeding in two stages. The first, which is by now well established in a number of centres, affects mainly those historians who would view history of science as, in its essentials, history of ideas. The second, still in embryo, occurs among those who would assimilate history of science to the model provided by social and cultural history.

Readers familiar with recent historiography will recognise a reflection of events in the historical profession at large. Intellectual history has recently attracted, and socio-cultural history now attracts, much talent. But these changes have had a greater effect on history of science than elsewhere. In a sense, admittedly somewhat anachronistic, they make it possible for the first time to see science as having a history, or at least one capable of interesting a contemporary historian. During the long years when scientific development was viewed as the routine result of applying "the scientific method," most history of science inevitably looked like mere chronology. Its concern—what else was there for its practitioners to do?—was to date and describe the emergence of the main components of objective method and to chronicle their triumph over superstition and error. Recent work in history of science offers a very different model, though one that, despite Professor Herbert Butterfield's elegant *vulgarisation*, has remained comparatively invisible to historians at large.

Under these circumstances the republication of six selected essays by the late Alexandre Koyré, some appearing in English for the first time, is particularly welcome.[1] Trained as a philosopher and historian of philosophy, Koyré's transition to the history of science was marked by the publication in 1939 of his three brilliant *Etudes galiléennes*.[2] Within a decade of their appearance, they and his subsequent work provided the models which historians of science increasingly aimed to emulate. More than any other single scholar, Koyré was responsible for the first stage of the historiographical revolution mentioned above. Concentrating almost entirely on the period from Copernicus to Newton, and principally upon their work in

[1] Alexandre Koyré, *Metaphysics and Measurement, Essays in [the] Scientific Revolution* (Chapman & Hall, 42s.).

[2] For a bibliography of Koyré's principal works, see I. B. Cohen and R. Taton (eds.), *Mélanges Alexandre Koyré* (Paris, 1964), vol. I, pp. xiii–xvii.

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astronomy and mechanics, Koyré showed how sympathetic and extended *explications de texte* could transform our image of the Scientific Revolution of the seventeenth century and of the men who made it.

Most previous historians of science, knowing from their own schooling what constituted sound scientific knowledge, had felt able to restrict their attention to the major works of the figures they studied. Even these they customarily scanned, seeking the passages in which their subject made lasting contributions to positive science. The discovery of such contributions was their ultimate goal. Koyré's aim was very similar, occasionally too much so. But for him the undertaking was far more problematic. To find out what, say, Galileo had contributed to the development of science, he had first to set Galileo in his own time, to discover what Galileo had taken science to be, what problems had seemed to him central, where his view of science and its problems had come from, and what alterations he had imposed upon that heritage. That task, Koyré felt, could not be done without immersion in an entire *corpus*, that of Galileo and those of his immediate predecessors, contemporaries, and successors.

One result was a characteristic infirmity of the new historiography. Neither Koyré nor his successors could contemplate confronting the entire history of a science, much less of the sciences. Their work tends to be monographic, restricted to a particular period and network of problems, a fact which helps to explain how very slowly their viewpoint has penetrated even the historical profession. But the rewards of Koyré's enterprises are correspondingly great. His Galileo (or Copernicus, or Newton) is no longer a modern scientist struggling to transcend the errors of his predecessors and the superstitions of his times. Nor is his Galileo even a man travelling a route which leads straight to Newton. Instead he is (or is on his way to becoming, for which see below) an Italian of the Counter-Reformation, at once a more coherent, more plausible, and more fascinating figure. This Galileo is, for example, a man who scorned experiment (surely an exaggeration, but Koyré's emphasis has proved all-important) and who unashamedly applied medieval concepts and techniques to frequently medieval problems and data. He is also, however, a man who set these traditional elements in an often Platonic, rather than Aristotelian, mould and who took the newly recovered works of Archimedes as a model. That combination promoted a radical transformation of science, one achieved not by new exploration of nature but (to paraphrase Professor Butterfield) by putting on a new thinking cap, by picking up the other end of the stick.

That view of Galileo, together with much else, emerges clearly from the first two of the essays assembled in *Metaphysics and Measurement*. (The subtitle is more leading, particularly as printed on the jacket which supplies the definite article missing on the title page. All six *Essays in the Scientific Revolution* deal with 17th-century science; Galileo is the central figure in all but the last two, brief occasional pieces written for symposia on Gassendi and Pascal.) First published in 1943, both "Galileo and the Scientific Revolution" and "Galileo and Plato" are brilliant distillations of some main themes from the *Etudes*, and they inaugurated the movement that has continued ever since. (The *Etudes* had been published four years earlier but, because of the war, were little known.) Inevitably, their conclusions have been qualified by subsequent scholarship, but they still make engaging and informative reading. What they do not supply, however, is even a hint of Koyré's most central contribution, his method of approaching a scientific text. Just because he worked through *explications de texte*, his extraordinary perceptiveness and erudition are displayed only in writings longer than any of those here collected. The *Etudes* themselves remain the richest example, followed perhaps by "A Documentary History of the Problem of Fall from Kepler to Newton." In works like these Koyré transcribed long passages and then contemplated them together with his readers. The example they provide will endure long after their particular conclusions have been sorted out, some to be rewoven into a more complex fabric and others to be set aside.

The third, and much the longest, essay in the volume," Galileo's Treatise: *De Motu Gravium*," is of particular interest. Written in 1960 and previously available only in French, it does provide at least a taste of the Koyré who engaged with texts. Here his objective is to resolve a problem which scholars, including himself, had previously ignored or shied away from. How did Galileo, in the absence of experiment, justify the conclusion that bodies of different specific gravities would fall at the same speed in a vacuum? (That bodies of the same specific gravity would fall together had been announced before. Galileo, on this point, appears to have followed unacknowledged sources.) For those willing to immerse themselves in the subtleties of Koyré's extended *explications*, this essay will make particularly fascinating and satisfying reading. Yet its overall conclusion, one of Koyré's favourites, that "Good physics is made *a priori*," surely cannot stand in quite this form.

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How can Koyré have failed even to discuss the role played in Galileo's argument (and very likely also in the origin of his novel thesis) by *observation* of pendulums? As Galileo said repeatedly, a ball of cork and a ball of lead, attached to strings of the same length, can be observed to "fall" together.

That is no trivial slip, and it illustrates something else about Koyré. He did exaggerate the universality of his insights, and he did make mistakes, very occasionally egregious ones. But whatever the stature of his conclusions, the problems he discerned while studying texts were invariably deep and important. For a long time we shall be able to learn from them, even when rejecting certain of Koyré's particular solutions. Nowhere is this clearer than in the fourth essay of the present collection, for me the most tantalising in the volume. In "An Experiment in Measurement," Koyré is again concerned to display the primacy of theoretical imagination over experience. Dealing with the little-known attempts, following Galileo, to measure the acceleration of free fall using a pendulum as timekeeper, he conclusively shows that contemporary apparatus was inadequate to the problem, and he suggests that the solution came instead from Huyghens' pendular theory. It provided, as experiment had not, an exact relation between the gravitational constant, on the one hand, and the length and period of the pendulum, on the other. But the first point scarcely needed proving, and the second is not, I think, quite right. The problem solved by Huyghens is not in all respects the one on which his predecessors had been engaged. For all earlier workers the standard of time had been the stars, and the pendulum was but a convenient intermediary. For Huyghens and his most penetrating contemporaries (the shift is mooted in Hooke and clear in Newton), terrestrial motions governed by mechanical laws became a standard prior to the stars. What Koyré's essay has suggested to me is that Newton's notion of absolute time may have been a far more original idea, and one with deeper roots in the new mechanics, than his concept of absolute space. "An Experiment in Measurement" isolates, though it does not resolve, one more deep problem in the development of seventeenth-century thought.

I BEGAN BY crediting Alexandre Koyré with a dominant role in the first stage of an historiographical revolution. Reading these essays should give substance to that attribution, but it will also illustrate how little place he left for the second stage. Partly because of his philosophical concern with ideas and partly because he dealt with men whose *work* was comparatively little affected by the new socio-economic climate of post-Renaissance Europe, he had little sympathy for those scholars who aimed to explain scientific development in social terms. Reminded in discussion that Galileo's *Discorsi* opened at the Arsenal in Venice, he proclaimed (and thought it an answer) that "Galileo went to the Arsenal to teach not to learn." For him the entire Baconian movement, with its emphasis on experiment, instrumentation, utility, and the study of the crafts, was the consequence of a misunderstanding which rendered it impotent to affect genuine science. Again, though he somewhere notes Galileo's pride in his membership in the *Accademia dei Lincei*, he never asks what it meant for Galileo's science that groups of this sort were now forming for the first time.

Perhaps that strict concentration on ideas was prerequisite to the historiographical transformation Koyré's work induced, but it is a limitation nonetheless. If he had dealt with the development of, say, chemistry or electricity and magnetism in the same way, it would have been a disaster, for these are fields which entered the sciences during the seventeenth century, in part, just because of the learned world's new concern with the crafts, technology, and instrumentation. Applied to more traditional fields like astronomy and mechanics, the approach has far more to recommend it, but the picture of science that results is one-sided even in these fields. Galileo was, in most respects, the figure Koyré makes him, but he was also, though the combination cannot always have been comfortable, the man who built a telescope, designed a pendulum clock with escapement, weighed the air, and invented the thermobaroscope, topics which Koyré scarcely mentions.[3]

Yet Koyré knew there were problems here. Late in life he reported from his sick-bed his pleasure in a book that seemed "to fill the gap between the history of science as such and the social history that till now were miles apart." The construction of firm bridges across that gap is, I think, the principal challenge currently confronting historians of science, and a number of younger scholars have begun to suggest how the job should be done. To them Koyré provides little leadership; but he does set many of their problems, and he would have welcomed their work.

[3] For a more balanced portrait of Galileo, see L. Geymonat, *Galileo Galilei* (trans. Drake, New York, 1965). Yet in this account the pendulum has swung vastly too far back. Koyré's image of Galileo, the man, may be one-sided, but his reconstruction of the scientific mind at work will not, in its main lines, be so lightly set aside.

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Keynes & the Keynesians

Some Intellectual Legends — By HARRY G. JOHNSON

FOR THE FIRST fifteen years after the publication of Keynes' *General Theory of Employment, Interest and Money* (1936), controversy raged in the pages of the learned economic journals over the meaning and validity of virtually every concept and proposition contained in the book. Thereafter there emerged very rapidly an orthodox consensus on what Keynes' contribution to economic theory and policy had been, and controversy virtually ceased—with the exception of an interchange in the pages of ENCOUNTER some years ago,[1] on the question of whether "we are all Keynesians now" in our ideas on economic policy, which interchange eventuated in the production of a rather pedestrian book by Robert Lekachman affirming and up-dating the orthodox consensus.[2] Thus Keynes became "the greatest economist of our time" (meaning that his contribution was so indisputable that no-one need concern himself over precisely what it was) and the *General Theory* an "acknowledged classic" (meaning that no active economist reads it, for fear of discovering that the master was himself confused about the message he had to impart to posterity). Meanwhile "Keynesian economics" has become the staple fare offered by the text-books and "Keynesian" ideas about the economic system have become the foundation of popular and governmental understanding of economic policy issues and policy formation.

The Keynesian approach to economic policy stresses the key importance of the national budget ("fiscal policy" in America) as an instrument of overall economic control. It tends to belittle the relevance and effectiveness of monetary policy (Bank rate and all that) as traditionally practised. This approach has been coming increasingly under fire from the resurgent exponents of the quantity theory approach to monetary matters (dubbed "monetarists" in the United States), a school of thought that Keynesians had believed vanquished forever by the "Keynesian Revolution." In this country the Keynesian approach has been severely discredited by the failure of Keynesian policies to make the Devaluation of 1967 the predicted success in the year following it, to the point where the Treasury has been obliged to convert to a "monetarist" approach to the handling of monetary policy. In the U.S.A. Keynesianism has been discredited, though to a lesser extent, by the failure of the tax surcharge recommended by "The New Economics" of the Keynesians (led by Walter Heller) to control the inflation associated with the war in Viet Nam.

In these politically exciting circumstances, the question of what Keynes was really driving at, and specifically whether orthodox "Keynesian economics" represents the essence of Keynes' contribution to the development of economic theory, itself becomes a live and exciting intellectual issue, and not merely a subject for arid scholarly debate among the downtrodden historians of economic thought. The publication of Axel Leijonhufvud's monumentally scholarly —but at the same time enjoyably readable— study of Keynes' economics[3] is therefore most appositely timed, from the point of view not only of the author's reputation but (as it turns out) of the repute of all other interested parties except the beleaguered Keynesians themselves— who in this context are to be identified with an American-led group of economists oriented towards mathematical and econometric model-building. For Leijonhufvud draws a sharp distinction between "Keynesian economics" and "the economics of Keynes." He shows that (on the one hand) the conventional beliefs of the Keynesians find virtually no support in the economics of Keynes, and that (on the other hand) Keynes was wrestling with basic theoretical problems of a kind which have attracted in recent times the attention of the neo-quantity theorists rather than the Keynesian model-

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[1] Robert Lekachman, "John Maynard Keynes", ENCOUNTER, December 1963, Roy Harrod, "Are We Really All Keynesians Now?" January 1964. See also the articles by Michael M. Postan, Harry Johnson and Michael Stewart in ENCOUNTER January, May and September 1968.

[2] Robert Lekachman, *The Age of Keynes* (Allen Lane The Penguin Press, 1967).

[3] Axel Leijonhufvud, *On Keynesian Economics and the Economics of Keynes* (Oxford University Press, 1968), 75s.

The main propositions of the book, and a perspective on its contribution, may be found in the author's subsequent pair of lectures at the London School of Economics, *Keynes and the Classics* (The Institute of Economic Affairs, Occasional Paper 30, 1969), 7s. 6d.

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builders, while his views on economic policy questions broadly accord with the emphasis of the monetarists on the importance of money and of monetary policy.

THUS KEYNES HIMSELF re-emerges as a brilliantly insightful student of the problems of a capitalist economy, whose ideas are directly relevant to ongoing scientific research at the frontiers of contemporary economics and not merely the fossilised relics of the intellectual evolutionary process. The neo-quantity theorists can dispute the credentials of the contemporary Keynesians, and claim the master's blessing for their own endeavours. At the same time, those Keynesians who followed Keynes for what they took to be his social message about capitalism—and have been both resentful and scornful of the way in which the mathematicians and econometricians have whisked Keynes the social critic beyond their (pre-eminently literary) intellectual competence and transformed his economics into an arcane quantitative expertise—can take comfort from the thought that those who snatched up and ran with the ball that Keynes put into play were after all heading for the wrong goal-posts and playing by the wrong rules. The only losers are those who have invested heavily of their time and intellect in perfecting the rules and the practice of a game in which Keynes himself was never interested. To put the point in terms of personalities: both Milton Friedman as the lead-quantity-theoretic critic of Keynesian economics and Joan Robinson as the leading custodian of the true Keynesian tradition can with a clear conscience commend Leijonhufvud's book to their students; Paul Samuelson, leader of the American Keynesian tradition, will find it embarrassing to do so.

While the general interest in Leijonhufvud's reinterpretation of Keynes lies in its implications for economic policy, the concern of the work is with Keynes' contribution to economic theory. As the author points out (in *Keynes and the Classics*), Keynes cannot really be accorded greatness on the basis of his contributions to thought on economic policy, since these ideas were very much in the air in the 1920s and his policy recommendations were by no means original.

AS A BACKGROUND to the understanding of Keynes' real contribution to theory, as Leijonhufvud reconstructs it, it is necessary to describe briefly the standard "income-expenditure" model of the economy which is the conventional representation of that contribution.

In this model there is one relation between the level of output and the rate of interest which will ensure equilibrium between demand and supply in the market for goods and services, and another relation between the same two variables which will ensure equilibrium between the demand for and supply of money. The two together determine a general equilibrium of the interest rate, output, and employment that will generally not be a full-employment equilibrium. The evolution of the orthodox interpretation of Keynes' contribution proceeded in two stages of counter-revolution.

First, the critics asserted that the Keynesian under-employment equilibrium depended on the assumption of wages being rigid in terms of money, because otherwise wage deflation would increase the quantity of money in real terms, hence lower interest rates and increase output and employment. To this the Keynesians replied that the expected result might not occur, either because investment and consumption were insensitive to interest rate changes, or because "liquidity preference" (the willingness to hold more money as interest rates fall) might become absolute, preventing the postulated fall in interest rates. The critics then brought in the "Pigou effect"—the effect of a rise in the purchasing power of money due to falling prices in increasing wealth and hence consumption, independently of any change in the interest rate. There the matter rested. The critics were content to have proved that Keynesian under-employment equilibrium was a special case of a more general "classical" economic model, resting either on wage rigidity or neglect of the "Pigou effect"; and the Keynesians were content to regard the special case as the practically relevant one, on the grounds of the observable reality of wage rigidity. Moreover, the Keynesians belittled the potential effectiveness of monetary expansion as a way of achieving by policy the effect that would follow automatically from wage flexibility if it existed. This was based on the grounds established in defence of Keynes against the first counter-attack, that both investment and consumption expenditure were in practice very insensitive to changes in interest rates. Instead, they placed their faith in fiscal policy, *i.e.*, direct operation on spending through the budget.

LEIJONHUFVUD'S INTERPRETATION of the economics of Keynes attacks the conventional income-expenditure model of Keynesian economics on two fronts.

First, Leijonhufvud contests the relevance of the framework for assessment of Keynes' contribution provided by a model of the economic system in which wages and prices are assumed to be perfectly flexible. The essence of Keynes' "long struggle to escape" from the classical tradition of economic theory, he argues, was pre-

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cisely that Keynes had a vision of the dynamics of the economic process in which the economy responds to disturbances, not by adjusting prices in order to clear markets at unchanged output levels, but by adjusting quantities of goods produced and labour employed in order to adjust output to prices regarded as "normal." This procedure is perfectly rational in view of uncertainty about whether changes in demand are temporary or permanent, and in the light of the contemporary theory of information in the market, according to which it is worth while within limits to hold supplies off the market in the hope of ascertaining whether a better price than that immediately available can be obtained by waiting. But the implication of the switch from the assumption of a price-adjusting to that of a quantity-adjusting market-clearing process is precisely the cumulation of disequilibrium through the famous Keynesian multiplier process. This is a concept which contemporary Keynesian theory has tended to abandon as an unnecessary fifth wheel on the elegant coach of general equilibrium theory.

Second, Leijonhufvud contests the interpretation of Keynes' economics as "the economics of the [Keynesian] special case." This requires him to marshal a great deal of complex modern economic theory to set the stage for making his point; and he has to depend heavily on exegetical analysis of some brief and ambiguous passages in the *General Theory*, as well as to draw on aspects of Keynes' *A Treatise on Money*, which he regards as having been subsumed in (whereas many Keynesians have regarded them as replaced by) the analysis of the *General Theory*. Very briefly, Leijonhufvud argues that the essential distinction drawn in the model-construction of the *General Theory* is between short-lived and long-lived assets, the latter including both bonds and real capital assets. The real capital assets in Keynes' approach must be distinguished from consumption goods, the former having a rising marginal cost of production in terms of the latter. Hence, in Keynes' view, a fall in the money rate of interest must have a substantial stimulative effect on investment, by raising the present value of income streams from long-lived capital assets; hence the demand price offered for newly produced real assets of this kind; and hence the current rate of production of capital goods.

Leijonhufvud further argues that, in sharp and admittedly very controversial contrast with the accepted reading of Keynes' concept of the "propensity to consume" as a relation between current income and current consumption expenditure, Keynes placed great store on the effect of a fall in the interest rate in increasing the perceived wealth of owners of long-lived assets, and so increasing their consumption expenditure. This argument gets him into the very deep theoretical water of how to rationalise this "second psychological law of consumption"—since a change in the rate of interest does nothing immediate to alter society's stock of real capital, future flow of output, and consequently objective wealth. His answer is that, because of the limitation of human life expectancy and the nature of capital, the typical wealth-owner has a flow of expected income outlasting his expected needs; so that a fall in the interest rate increases the present value of future income more than that of future needs and makes him feel subjectively wealthier than before. This point Leijonhufvud takes to be the essence of Keynes' concept of "liquidity preference," the preference for holding wealth in immediately realisable form.

Since, according to Leijonhufvud, Keynes believed that a fall in the interest rate would powerfully affect spending on investment and consumption, the essence of his theory of underemployment equilibrium must lie in those forces in the money economy that prevent the interest rate from falling automatically sufficiently to prevent the multiplier process from doing its fell work of propagating unemployment. Here Leijonhufvud appeals to Keynes' emphasis on expectations about the future rate of interest as an influence on the current interest rate, and the inelasticity of these expectations in response to downward pressures on the currently prevailing rate. But, Leijonhufvud argues, Keynes did not believe in the power of the speculators to frustrate the use of monetary policy to maintain employment, except during a deep depression. In these circumstances, as Leijonhufvud interprets him, he thought that the problem might be a collapse of the confidence of entrepreneurs in the profitability of investment, rather than too high a market rate of interest. In that case, the appropriate policy would be public investment of a pump-priming nature, rather than monetary expansion aimed at reducing interest rates.

On this interpretation, Keynes appears as both far more perceptive as an economic theorist—and far less devoted to the superiority of fiscal over monetary policy as an economic policy adviser—than contemporary Keynesians would like to believe.

As with any reinterpretation of a classic writer in the light of subsequent scientific progress, there must be a residual doubt as to how far Leijonhufvud's re-reading of Keynes is snatching at straws in order to prevent the breaking of the camel's back and to retain the

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beast as a working member of the caravan of progress. But there can be no doubt that this work has cleared the air of a stultifying ideological controversy, and paved the way for further advance in the understanding of the workings of a monetary economy.

Auden's Longer Poems

Collected Longer Poems. By W. H. AUDEN. *Faber and Faber,* 45s.

ONE BEGINS to wonder whether long poems are called for more often by critics than by poetry readers generally. Certainly lament for the death of the long poem has become a favourite critical theme. But while the old adage that long poems are written by poets who cannot write short ones remains largely true, it may be argued that the most influential poems of this century have in fact been long. *The Waste Land* and the *Four Quartets* have been as influential as any shorter work; and Pound's *Cantos*, Carlos Williams' *Paterson*, and Ginsberg's *Howl* have all had—for better or for worse, and often for disaster—their varying degrees of influence. Ask any young poet from Greenwich Village or Liverpool to name the most important poem in *his* life and it is likely that he will point to *Howl*. A young poet from Oxford might well pick one of the others, or turn elsewhere, but I would be surprised if the choice fell on any of the six works in W. H. Auden's *Collected Longer Poems*.

Yet, Leavis apart, the majority of critics would seem to grant Auden his just place as the most accomplished and versatile of living poets, and one who has been, and who remains, exceptionally influential. Clearly, he dominated the generation of the 1930s with a power and range that few could approach. Master of an impressive number of forms, from the Ballad to the Blues, he was all the more able to contain the see-sawing beliefs and passions of the time. Committed, yet distanced, his poetry was remarkable for its surface calm, the pincers moving obliquely but firmly over their subject. The tension could be riveting, especially where the aural matrix was based on popular tradition, as in *Refugee Blues*:

Went to a committee; they offered me a chair;
Asked me politely to return next year:
But where shall we go to-day, my dear, but where shall we go to-day?

Came to a public meeting; the speaker got up and said:
"If we let them in, they will steal our daily bread";
He was talking of you and me, my dear, he was talking of you and me....

The influence of music on Auden's verse, apparent in this poem and throughout the longer works, has always been salient: even his worst lines often "sound" impressive. Indeed the poems on which his reputation will finally come to rest may well be the magnificent early lyrics —far away from the world of Spain and Fascism against which he cried out so forcefully in much-quoted poems he no longer favours.

With his move to America in 1938, Auden's area of interest and commitment changed visibly. By 1940 the Auden conception of love had moved away from an ideal union of man and woman, or of a brotherhood of man ("we must love one another or die") to a Christian ideal, making one aware of what Spender has called "the odd impersonality" of Auden. Coated more with the philosopher's semantics, the four long poems of this later period (*New Year Letter*, *For the Time Being*, *The Sea and the Mirror*, *The Age of Anxiety*) are in the main colder, more distant, more cerebral than any of Auden's previous work; they contrast strikingly with the earliest of the longer poems included in this Collection, *Paid on Both Sides* (published 1930) and *Letter to Lord Byron* (published 1937) —the first a rather earnest, at times muddled, verse play concerning a blood feud (or is it school-gang rivalry, or both?), the second a rollicking, deliberately chatty "long" poem full of the dry self-aware wit of which Auden is master.

Letter to Lord Byron is an inventive, technically dazzling piece of writing, a triumph of taste. It sets a tone and, for all its length, rarely slips from it. As befits its subject the poem is self-mocking, but it mocks also many sacred establishment shrines. To read it is to eavesdrop on witty gossip about the age and its values and to learn something also about the author's own life and tastes, for it contains a vivid section of autobiography. The poem is a lap of honour taken at high speed. "I like your verse because she's gay and witty" writes Auden to Byron, and here one might pay the same compliment to Auden.

The outward setting of Auden's *New Year Letter* (January 1, 1940) is his newly-adopted America. Already the change in tone from the only slightly earlier *September 1, 1939* is

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dramatic. The personal anguish that reached its climax in the (now discarded) lines, "*All I have is a voice/ to undo the folded lie*," has distanced to, "*Art is not life and cannot be/a midwife to society*." The attempt in *New Year Letter* to relate art, religion, and society within an agreed Kierkegaardian design seems far removed from the ragings of Europe which remain the poem's inevitable backcloth and its point of departure. The guns are distant:

> *The cities we abandon fall*
> *To nothing primitive at all;*
> *This lust in action to destroy*
> *Is not the pure instinctive joy*
> *Of animals, but the refined*
> *Creation of machines and mind....*

Such questions of How, Why, and What, indeed the whole gamut of Existentialist Choice which *New Year Letter* raises, are as relevant to Western society now as they were to Auden then. Whether or not they are organic to the poetry as a whole is another matter. For all the range and muscle of the verse, the refined hypnotic couplets falling just so, the ideas appear to be somehow removed from the poetry in a way they rarely are in either the earlier or later short poems. There are marvellous sections, to be sure, whole passages (short poems almost) where the verse opens out suddenly from close arguing into poetry of great dignity; but these are often linked to memories, or are lyrical asides touching the "real" world, and as such are only incidentally related to the poem's high theme and dialectics:

> *Delighted with their takings, bars*
> *Are closing under fading stars;*
> *The revellers go home to change*
> *Back into something far more strange,*
> *The tightened self in which they may*
> *Walk safely through their bothered day....*

In the two long poems published in 1944, *For the Time Being* (a Christmas Oratorio) and *The Sea and the Mirror* (a "commentary" on *The Tempest*), Auden's apparent ability to command almost any verse form is given full rein. The former is often deemed a high-water mark in the poet's achievement. It seems to me, however, an unhappy amalgam of two styles—the rhetorical/pontifical, and the colloquial. On the deeper level, Auden has edged here into Eliot territory without ever really inhabiting it; even some of the familiar symbolism appears (the garden, the rose). The lighter, colloquial interpolations, superb in themselves, only serve to highlight the surrounding rhetoric. Admittedly, as Richard M. Ohmann maintains in *Auden's Sacred Awe* (1963) "the real world is for Auden an allegorical text, and the intellectual contrasts that can be placed upon it are paramount...." Nevertheless, a great deal of the "real" *is* present, many wholly-realised passages touching the lives of ordinary people (The Wise Men, The Shepherds) sitting unhappily beside the more abstract, clinical versifying.

Stylistically, *The Sea and the Mirror* is altogether surer; nowhere are form and metre more tactfully used to match character. Strangely, despite its necessary literary overtone, the world created in this poem is a tangible one. Prospero's opening speech, for instance, is that of a man of flesh and blood. His words to Ariel, as he leaves the island, are convincing:

> *Over there, maybe, it won't seem quite so dreadful*
> *Not to be interesting any more, but an old man*
> *Just like other old men, with eyes that water*
> *Easily in the wind, and a head that nods in the sunshine....*

The Master and Boatswain's rumbustious song, Miranda's beautiful villanelle, are Auden at his sophisticated best. Less happy is the closing piece of Jamesian pastiche (Caliban to the Audience) which, for all its virtuoso appeal, stands aloof from the poetry in a way that underscores Thomas Blackburn's contention (in *The Price of an Eye*) that too often in Auden "the voice of the poet is drowned by the chatter of the don."

PERHAPS THAT REMARK is more properly true of *The Age of Anxiety* (published 1947) which soon leaps, after its direct opening, into an area of metaphysical speculation. As in *For the Time Being*, Auden seems only too aware of the dramatic problems, introducing colloquialisms, echoes of popular songs, parody—all the tricks from his fertile hat—to modernise the tone and keep the action within the realm of theatricality. Repeatedly though, these props, which work so stunningly on their own terms in the shorter poems, remain contrivances here: the poetry and the subtle intellectualising, the man and the complicating mind, moving in a parallel direction, fusing only occasionally.

So, as elsewhere in the *Longer Poems*, there is the magician's display rather than the ignition, and one is left with memories of individual short poems—complex, dazzling, distinct, yet never forming quite the organic whole which makes, say, *The Waste Land*, not so much a long poem, but a poem which had to be its length.

Jeremy Robson

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Marx: His Death & Resurrection

By Louis J. Halle

ALL GREAT MEN must be viewed in two distinct aspects. There is the limited aspect in which they are great, and there is the other aspect in which they are ordinary human beings like the rest of us. The greatness of most truly great men resides in some quality of vision that on occasion exalts them, and that exalts those to whom it is communicated. No great man, however, lives constantly on the level of his vision. Like the rest of us, in their daily lives all are largely preoccupied with petty concerns; they are prone to be moved by jealousy or bad temper, to say foolish things, to act meanly, and to behave inconsiderately toward those who are close to them.

Our need for heroes to worship, however, generally makes us disregard or deny what is ordinary in a great man. For the man as he was we substitute, sometimes while he is still alive, a legend. Even while Gandhi, for example, was still alive, there was a legendary Gandhi different from the real one: for the real Gandhi was an advocate of the use of violence when, as it seemed to him, the occasion allowed of no good alternative, while the legendary Gandhi is an absolute pacifist. The real Gandhi advocated economic policies or practices that had no relevance to the requirements of reality, or offered such impractical advice as that all the Jews under Hitler should commit suicide, while the legendary Gandhi is perfect in understanding and counsel.

The disparity between legend and reality seems to me greater in the case of Karl Marx than in that of any other modern figure. In legend he is an infallible prophet, basing his prophecies on an empirical science unknown before him. But one has only to read his writings to see for oneself that, in addition to being romantic rather than empirical or scientific, the whole body of prediction they contain was long ago proved wrong by the course history actually took. (I assume that fewer and fewer persons still believe that the Russian *coup d'état* of October 1917 bore any resemblance to the Revolution predicted in *The Communist Manifesto,* or that what followed was a "dictatorship of the proletariat.") This presents a full contrast to the predictions of his contemporary, Alexis de Tocqueville, which have in fact been borne out; yet d Tocqueville, who never acquired a legendary persona, has no reputation as a prophet remotely comparable to that of Marx.

For years I have had a frustrated curiosity about Karl Marx as a human being, a curiosity left totally unsatisfied by such biographies as that of Franz Mehring, which depict Marx as if he were God the Father, perfect in his wisdom, infallible in his utterance, but persecuted throughout his life on earth as God the Son had been persecuted. One finds nothing about his ordinary day-to-day life, since eating, sleeping, and the involvements of family living are not for gods.

At last, however, I have found a biography that deals with the human Marx and, in fact, goes to the other extreme from Mehring's. Robert Payne's *Marx*[1] concentrates on his daily life, with special emphasis on such activities as pub-crawling in London, drunken binges, and whatever else may serve to diminish the man and discredit the legend. It is a hostile biography, in some ways petty, meretricious, and unscholarly, but I found it satisfying in a way that I daresay Mr. Payne would not have expected. To the extent that it makes Marx human it provides grounds for viewing him with the compassion proper to all us pitiful mortals, caught up as we all are in the tragedy of life.

I ADMIT THAT my own attitude toward Marx, both as a person and as a writer, has always been hostile. I have credited him with an epic albeit fictional vision of history,[2] but I have always abhorred the style of writing that represents the main Marxist tradition and has its origin in Marx's own work: the *ex-cathedra* dogmatism, the overstatement, the crude vituperation, and the screaming hatred that dominates so much of it. Marx appears to have had no love for his fellow men, no compassion, no humanitarianism, and little concern for the sufferings of anyone but himself. Men did not exist for him as individual human beings of flesh and blood but as abstract social classes or statistics. His entire career was nominally dedicated to the working class, yet he showed no

[1] Robert Payne, *Marx* (W. H. Allen, 70s.).

[2] See my article, "Marx's Religious Drama" in ENCOUNTER, October 1965.

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interest in working men and had virtually no contact with them. His "Proletariat" was simply an epic hero of the imagination. He represented the German philosophical tradition in which grandiose abstractions take the place of existential realities, and are even dealt with as if they were actual persons possessed of mind and will. The extremism of Marx, represented as well by the line of Marxist tradition that passes through Lenin, has always been extraordinarily callous to the sufferings of real human beings; and there is no doubt that Marx, himself, occasionally revelled in the dream of wholesale massacres, with blood flowing in the streets. One is tempted to believe, uncharitably, that his consistent opposition to improving the lot of the workers by progressive reforms, rather than by violent revolution, had at least some of its roots in this dream. Lenin, Stalin, and Mao Tse-tung, although not representing Marx's thinking in other respects, have been representative of him in the same lack of concern for real people, in their disposition to cure the evils of society by subjecting actual flesh-and-blood to suffering and death on a scale that no one else in history except Hitler has ever approached. All this, as I say, has always made Marx's writings, and those of his successors, repulsive to me.

There was also the fact that Marx's first book, *On the Jewish Question*, had been an anti-Semitic polemic in which he poured his vituperation over the people (again, regarded as a class or collectivity) from whom he had himself sprung, but from whom he dissociated himself with the hatred that the book manifests. It is extraordinary how those who have cultivated the Marxian legend have succeeded in keeping the existence or nature of this book quiet, or in explaining it away by pretending that he was using the terms "Jew" and "Judaism" in a metaphorical sense only.

I admit, as well, that my curiosity about Marx's personal life was not the expression of a favourable disposition. I could not understand how a man could allow his wife and children to live in the most humiliating misery, his children dying and his wife suffering mental and physical agonies for want of proper medical care, rather than subject himself to the normal discipline of working to support his family. Did he never feel a twinge of conscience over this? One could hardly admire the way he sponged all his life on his friends and relatives, even exploiting their labour, as when he got Engels, a man who was busy as he was not, to write many of the columns for *The New York Tribune* that appeared under Marx's name and for which he pocketed the pay. A puritan streak in my nature and inheritance (which, like grey hair, begins to show itself with age) aroused in me incredulity, even more than disapproval, of a life so lived.

IT IS A PARADOX that the reading of the Payne biography has had the effect of softening my standing hostility toward Marx. This is partly because Payne is himself so unfair and so unpitying in his treatment of what is, after all, a long record of human suffering that the reader at last tends to rebel against the writer and to make compensating judgments.

One example will suffice. It is virtually beyond doubt that Marx was the father of Helene Demuth's illegitimate son. Helene Demuth had been a servant girl in the household of Marx's father-in-law, the Baron von Westphalen. When Marx's wife, Jenny, was expecting her second child, the Baroness had sent Lenchen, as she was called, to help out, and Lenchen had remained with the Marxes for the rest of their lives. There is not a wisp of evidence to indicate the circumstances in which Marx fathered her child. Nevertheless, on page 260 Mr. Payne allows himself to speculate on whether it was a case of seduction or rape, suggesting that it was most likely the latter, and by page 266 he is referring to the "rape" as if the matter were settled.

Now the fact is that at this period Karl and Jenny Marx, Lenchen, and the three Marx children were all living together in two rooms in Soho, a general-purpose room and a "tiny bedroom." They had no bathroom and they had to go downstairs to the common rooming-house toilet. Since the general-purpose room was also Marx's study, where he habitually worked through a large part of the night, one wonders where Lenchen could have slept. In any case, the circumstances could not have permitted what most of us would consider the normal requirements of privacy. Presumably it was hardly practicable for the members of the household even to dress and undress in private. Marx was still a young man, his wife was four years older than he, bedridden with illness much of the time, afraid of becoming pregnant, and sometimes away from London for weeks at a stretch. Lenchen was young and pretty. Various persons are bound to react differently to the event in question, but my own reaction is: what else could one expect? Marx and Lenchen were living together in the closest quarters during long periods when Mrs. Marx was away. Surely the circumstances call for a compassionate attitude, not for an unsupported accusation of rape! The biographer sometimes seems as lacking in human understanding as ever his subject was. So it is that his hostile animus has the effect of arousing sympathy for his subject even in a reader whose basic disposition is hostile.

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THE STATEMENT THAT my own hostility was softened by reading the biography must be qualified. For the young Marx I feel no sympathy. From his university days he appears to have combined a monumental intellectual arrogance with a disposition to admire whatever was Satanic—to see himself, in fact, as another Satan destroying the hated creation of his celestial opponent, which he looked forward to seeing washed away in its own blood. His consequent destructive animus does not appear to have been devoid of what is the corrupting element in almost all revolutionaries, the desire for personal power. Rather than join the established society, earning his bread and making his career in it, he would overthrow it, and in the vaguely imagined society that he would erect on its ruins he would be top man.

Until Marx was well into middle-age he generally expected the Revolution he predicted to occur imminently. Perhaps he had to believe this, for it was the entire justification of what was otherwise simply a self-indulgent way of life that kept his family in destitution. He was repeatedly assuring himself and his associates that any day now the Revolution would come which would vindicate him and, one surmises, elevate him to his rightful place as the hero of the world.

This is familiar and plausible to one who remembers the intellectual circles of New York in the 1930s, when a standard conversational phrase in serious use was: "Come the Revolution. . . ." The commonly accepted belief, after the Great Depression began, was that what had happened in Russia in 1917 was about to happen in the United States and, indeed, all over the world. I knew many typical intellectuals of the time well enough to know that, whether consciously or unconsciously, their active support of the Communist line was not disinterested. They were making a place for themselves on the band-wagon of history. Some of them were manoeuvring actively so that, "come the Revolution," they would find themselves in positions similar to those of Lenin and his associates after October 1917—positions from which they would watch us others, who had not had the sense to see what was coming, passing through the streets in the equivalent of tumbrels on our way to some modern version of the guillotine. Remembering all this, I think I understand Marx's mind through these years of his life better than I would otherwise, but without sympathy.

Engels, whose name is indissolubly linked with that of Marx, also arouses no sympathy in me. He rose in the management and at last became part owner of his father's textile factory in Manchester. I can find no evidence that he ever

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took any interest in the condition of the workers in that factory. What occupied a good part of his personal life was pretty women, good food and wines, fox-hunting, and other amenities of a *bon-vivant's* life; and when he died in 1895 he left a personal estate worth £25,267—presumably representing his appropriation of the "surplus value" produced by the labour he exploited. He too lived most of his life in a position to make a satisfactory adjustment to the Revolution when and if it came, although in his later years he tended to become cynical about the whole Marxist movement, even going so far as to denigrate the doctrine of "historical materialism" on which it was based.

GIVEN THE PERSONAL ATTITUDE I have set forth here, I might have been expected to be among the most uncritical readers of the Payne biography. Nevertheless, there comes a time in the tale of Marx's life, even as related by a hostile biographer, when one's compassion begins to be stirred. Out of the *hubris* of a very young man, he had committed himself to an undisciplined and irresponsible career, based on the false premise that he had it within his power to turn the world upside-down. But by the time he was in his mid-fifties and the premise had been reduced to a pipe-dream it was too late for him to choose another direction. He had for so long lived a life of doing as he pleased, within the limits of such shake-downs as he could subject Engels and others to, that he had at last become genuinely unemployable. In fact, he was gradually becoming incapable of any work at all. It is true that in his old age he was finally put on a comfortable pension by Engels; but by then he was suffering from painful ailments too unpleasant to think about, his wife who had been born to the elegant life of the German aristocracy had been simply burned out by the years of horror, during which for long periods she had wondered how she could survive from day to day. Of their six children three, including the only two boys, had died. The tale of human suffering in the life of this family builds up until at last any faults in those who suffer become irrelevant. Beyond a certain point it would be both pharisaical and cruel to suggest that such agony was deserved. What does it matter, any longer, that the young Marx had thought he had the world by the tail, and had looked forward to the torment he would inflict on it? The prematurely old Marx, although he still cultivates hatred and arrogant language, is essentially a broken man. The hope of revolution and personal power is gone, and all he has left to feed his self-esteem is a rare mention of himself in a newspaper.

As for Johanna Bertha Julie Jenny Marx, *née* von Westphalen, history can provide no greater example of a woman's dedication to the man to whom she has given her life. Here no one could make a case that she deserved the horror of those thirty-eight years of marriage. One can only hope, if one wishes to believe in some ultimate justice, that there were compensations in those inner recesses of the mind to which no outsider can ever penetrate.

The whole tale, as Mr. Payne tells it, ends at last like the final scene of *Hamlet* with death piled on death. The aged Jenny, who has been declining throughout all the years of her marriage, dies with her hand in her husband's, her last words, spoken in English, being: "My strength is broken. . . ." The old man lasts for another fourteen months, cared for by his daughter Eleanor, trying to recover his health by going from one resort or watering place to another, but stricken by news of his favourite daughter's death. Then one day, in his London house, Lenchen "went upstairs to see him and returned two minutes later. 'Come up,' she said. 'He is half asleep.'" Eleanor, Lenchen, and Engels "then went to the bedroom and found him sitting in his armchair. He was dead at the age of sixty-five."

The next to die, in the ugliness and agony of a painful ailment, is Lenchen, now an old woman who had moved into Engels' household after Marx's death. "We were the last two of the pre-1848 old guard," Engels wrote to his friend Friedrich Sorge. He, himself, was to die a few years later of cancer of the throat.

It remains to mention only that each of the two surviving daughters, Laura and Eleanor, after long years of unhappiness and hopes that all came to nothing, ended her life by suicide.

The history of the House of Marx, taking its departure from the *hubris* of the young Karl, matches that of the House of Atreus.

THE EPILOGUE is well known. Karl Marx never became a great public figure in his life-time, as he had expected he would; and in the end, after years of retirement and inactivity, he was a pitiful old man who had been all but forgotten. However, the alienated intellectuals of the succeeding generation would feel the need of a Prophet of the Industrial Age to take the place of the Christ, born into a pastoral society, who had come to seem irrelevant in the circumstances of the new times. So when Engels, who had no illusions about Marx's limitations, set out to create a legendary Marx the conditions were propitious. Marx had always spoken in the voice of prophecy, as if he had been Jehovah handing down the Tablets of the Law, and this counted where the question of

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whether the prophecies had been confirmed by the course of history did not. By contrast with Marx, de Tocqueville had prophesied truly, but because he had not presented himself as if speaking out of the thunder, and because his vision had no quality of epic drama, he had no qualifications for the role.

Marx's burial was postponed in order to enable any following on the Continent to come to England for it; but in the end there were only eleven persons who attended the funeral, six of them members of the immediate family, if one includes Engels as an honorary member. Engels began his funeral oration to the other ten with the words: "On March 14, at a quarter to three in the afternoon, the greatest living thinker ceased to think." So the legend was launched. After Marx's death he was born again, this time as another Mahomet—except that, unlike Mahomet, he was a Prophet without a God.

By a caprice of history that the real Marx did not live to see, and that Engels viewed with becoming irony, the Prophet needed by the new Industrial Age was the unhappy old man whose life had been a failure and to whose graveside only eleven mourners could be gathered. All history is tragic as well as ironic; and great men, even though we know they are not good men, may still be deserving of compassion.

Pilot in a Storm

Eshkol of Israel. The Man and the Nation. By TERENCE PRITTIE. *Museum Press.* £2.

AT FIRST SIGHT Levi Eshkol, the Israeli Prime Minister who died in February of this year, is not a promising subject for biography, and any book which depicts his life and times is in danger of being overwhelmed by the times at the expense of the life. He was a self-effacing man and his character was in marked contrast to that of his predecessors. From the end of the 19th century to 1963 the Zionist, and later Israeli leadership had been intensely dramatic. Herzl, Weizmann, Ben-Gurion were men of massive and arresting personality, impressive orators, men who played and were seen to play great roles on the stage of the political world.

Eshkol came as an anti-climax. He was no orator and he was incapable of a theatrical gesture. His arrival as Prime Minister in succession to Ben-Gurion has been compared to that of Clement Attlee in succession to Winston Churchill and of Truman in place of the flamboyant Roosevelt. The comparison is apt in both cases. Those who underestimated him found that they had made a costly mistake. He had to stand up to challenges as grave as any of those which confronted any of his predecessors, and his performance proved him their equal.

This "Truman element" in the story of Eshkol is extremely well brought out by Mr. Terence Prittie in a book which, in spite of some defects, is a remarkably well-studied and reliable guide to the complex story of modern Jewish history in Israel.

Let me get rid of what I feel to be the defects now, rather than leave mention of them to the end in scorpion fashion. I see two kinds of fault: a few (very few) gross errors of fact, and the less easily defined weakness of needless bias. Of the first kind the faults seem to be due to occasional moments of hurried and unconsidered writing. For example:

> In 1906 Weizmann had an hour's talk with Arthur Balfour in Manchester, a meeting which has, even in retrospect, attracted curiously little attention, since Balfour had been made Prime Minister only a year before.

If a story—a very good one it is too—has been repeated once too often rather than the opposite it is the tale of this justly celebrated meeting. I fancy that an account of it was first published by Mrs. Dugdale in her life of Balfour. Weizmann repeated it in his own autobiography, and it is to be found in many other places. Among Jews it is as familiar as the tale of Alfred and the cakes among Englishmen. When I heard someone begin to tell it in an after-dinner speech some twelve years ago, I noticed anxious looks as diners signalled to each other: "Oh Lord, not that one again!" Balfour became Prime Minister on Lord Salisbury's retirement in July 1902, as a glance at the *D.N.B.* could tell the laxest of researchers.

Of the Mufti of Jerusalem Mr. Prittie says on page 97:

> Haj Amin Husseini openly espoused the Nazi cause. He ensconced himself in Baghdad for much of the war and paid frequent visits to Germany for talks with Hitler and his ministers.

This picture of the Mufti week-ending with the *Führer* from Baghdad (officially British-allied) is wholly unreal. His war-time career falls into two distinct periods: in exile from Palestine, first in the Lebanon, after in Baghdad; then after he had escaped internment on the collapse of Rashid Ali's rebellion and made his way to Germany in 1941, he lived in Berlin and Nazi-

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occupied Europe till the end of the war when he was interned by the French.

As regards bias, this, as said, is not easy to judge with precision. Mr. Prittie has not written a biased book but on the contrary, one marked by such fairness that his rare departures from that virtue come with added shock. It seems to me biased to dismiss Attlee's first administration with a few contemptuously patronising remarks about its general accomplishment and then to fix attention exclusively on its (undoubtedly wrong-headed) management of the Palestine question. I am not, I am sure, the only reader to be dismayed when Mr. Prittie refers to the blowing up of part of the King David Hotel in one mild sentence, and then devotes a long passage, with quotations, to the subject of the iniquity of General Sir Evelyn Barker in rashly losing his temper in face of this hateful crime. One gets the impression that the author sees greater wrong in an injured and furious man scolding Jews than in terrorists murdering numerous Jews, Arabs, and British.

To look at less emotional matters: I am sure there should be far more mention of the nagging question of oil supplies in Allied strategy during World War II than is to be found here. Oil was the one and only excuse for the appeasement policy towards the Arab anti-Zionist policy which was embedded in the White Paper of 1939. What no good Zionist or Israeli likes to admit, is that the policy was successful in the short term—not at all, of course, in the long term. But without that short-term success, British and then Allied forces ran a risk (how great it would be hard to say) of being grievously hampered and perhaps made impotent in the Middle East campaigns against Italy and Germany. It is against evidence to suggest, as this book does, that Egypt was at that time a useless because treacherous ally of Britain. It is also against evidence to assert that British policy discouraged a Jewish Palestine Division on anti-Semitic prejudice alone.

To come to more recent events: I think that the book should have given more consideration to one reason (perhaps not the main one) as to why Israel fails to get response to her frequent efforts at a peace conference with her enemies. It is quite true that all the Arab powers concerned have shown a hateful disregard of the evil of terrorism and have given it every encouragement; but, even so, can anyone be surprised if Arab Governments view with distrust the prospect of discussion with a government which includes Menachem Beigin as a minister? I see no recognition anywhere in this book of Eshkol's folly in taking him into the Israeli Administration.

I have already said that this is not a biased book. It is, rather, an eminently fair book into which elements of bias have entered unsuspected. I think that comes from the fact (against which every writer on this subject has to be wary) that the great majority of writers who deal with Palestine, Israel, the Arab-Jewish conflict, and all that resulted from the Balfour Declaration, read far more Zion-orientated books than others. It is inevitable that this should be so. The books presenting the Zionist case are not only more numerous, but far more intelligent and better written than those written with anti-Zionist sympathies. The exceptions are few. Impartiality is hard to come by in an area so cruelly beset with emotion of the utmost bitterness.

Having indicated some blemishes, let me insist on the book's great merits.

First of all I would stress that it has a wonderfully strong narrative line. It is not just one of those works of information which "all scholars of this subject should read," and which, in effect, usually means hardly anyone at all. This is addressed to the general reader, and if the latter takes the plunge he will be rewarded. Against the literary challenge that the subject is not one to appeal instantly to a taste for drama in public life, Mr. Prittie has emerged triumphantly. The story is, in a subtle way, as exciting as the story of Ben-Gurion who emerges as part-hero, part-villain, part-Hamlet of political Israel, and the author's well-balanced delineation of the varying and distressful relationship of Eshkol with this great and sometimes tortuous man is masterly.

The affair of Pinhas Lavon was slightly more complicated than *l'Affaire Dreyfus*, and can remind the reader of some of the insane political elaborations in which the Russian secret police and (if memoirs and histories are to be trusted) our own *S.O.E.* have indulged in the past. This is the kind of subject which a conscientious historian can make wearisome. Mr. Prittie never plays to the gallery and he makes it compulsive reading. The same may be said of his account of the now oft-told tale of the origins, progress, and consequences of the Six Day War of 1967. From first to last he seizes his readers' attention whether in writing of the little known or the familiar.

But to spin a good yarn, great as is that achievement (often spurned by critics), is not the ambition of this book. It is, rather, to tell the life story of a decent, unassuming, but astonishingly able man, who was faced by threatening disaster and terrible choices. Does he succeed in that?

I have reservations, as I have shown already, but these are in matters of detail, and do not

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concern the major theme of this fine book. Its climax is the conduct of Eshkol in 1967. I hope that those members of Parliament and writers to *The Times* who see justice on the side of the Middle East enemies of Israel will read this book, and (a vain hope, I am sure) that it will influence their minds.

General opinion—including that which is friendly to Zion, and which does not see Nasser as innocent simply because, at the end of his long war-mongering manoeuvres, he may not have fired the first shot in 1967—does feel that the Arab countries have suffered a great wrong in the matter of the refugees from Palestine. This is manifestly true. What that same opinion ignores is that there have been nearly as many Jewish refugees from the Arabic-speaking world since 1948 as Arab refugees from Palestine, and moreover that whereas the majority of the Arab refugees fled from their homes in panic, the Jewish refugees were without exception forced into exile by persecution and often by violence. Opinion ignores the difference between the fate which met the two kinds of victim. The Jewish refugees were welcomed in Israel and given all available help, usually in very difficult circumstances, to remake their lives. The Arab refugees were and are kept in a state of misery, in pursuit of a conscious and inhumanly wicked policy. Misery, it is believed, will maintain a satisfactory recruitment of fanatically anti-Zionist terrorists, and will be valuable as propaganda. For that reason efforts to solve or even ameliorate the lot of the refugees in Jordan and elsewhere are looked on with the gravest suspicion. It is unpleasant to have to record that the policy is not unsuccessful. We do not see the terrorists over here as they do in Israel, but we can see the success of the propaganda.

THE CONSEQUENCES of the Israeli victory of 1967 were no better than those of most wars. An immediate threat was neutralised but not removed. Jerusalem was no longer divided and that was a great gain, but peace remains remote. The great powers have not contributed anything to excite hope. General de Gaulle gave dramatic illustration of the fact that narrow nationalism is as much the dominant political factor in the world now as it was in the year 1914. He was more demonstrative but not much more cynical than other Western leaders. Many thoughtful persons in Israel fear that their country, having been forced into the role of a Middle East Prussia, will not be able to change it for something better. The great powers (including ourselves) show no sign of helping them out of their dilemma.

The war of 1967 injured the *U.N.*, and it is possible that it gave the institution a mortal

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wound. Believers assure one that U Thant had no alternative but to withdraw UNEF as soon as Nasser asked him to. I have been severely rebuked in this magazine for expressing a different view. After reading this book and consulting contemporary documents I am unrepentant. U Thant seems to have behaved correctly from a legal point of view, but surely the moment called not for correctitude but courage, imagination, and initiative. It is difficult to see how the *U.N.* can recover public esteem after such a pathetic display of helplessness.

The disappointments following the June war, *"les misères d'une victoire,"* might have shaken a man of less inner strength than Levi Eshkol enjoyed. To the end he remained the familiar, unassuming, lovable man who, perhaps to his own surprise as much as anyone else's, had proved to be a pilot who weathered the storm. He was a rare and fine being and this book is a worthy monument to him.

Christopher Sykes

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Hitchcock. By FRANÇOIS TRUFFAUT. *Secker & Warburg*, £5 5s. *Panther Paperback*, 30s.

IN 1962 François Truffaut wrote to Alfred Hitchcock and asked him if he would agree to an interview of about five hundred questions. Hitchcock accepted this offer, and in the August of that year Truffaut and he settled down to "a running conversation from nine to six every day, achieving something of a track record as we talked our way through lunches." Though the English version of this marathon does not say so, they must have met at least once after this date, for the discussion continues up to *Torn Curtain*, made in 1966.

"Dialogue," says Hitchcock, "should simply be sound among other sounds, just something that comes out of the mouths of people whose eyes tell the story in visual terms." As a shooting-script, this text would be a non-starter: 250 pages of dialogue, and no eyes to tell the story. Much of the talk is concerned with facts, dates and—more compellingly—with the way Hitchcock brought off certain trick effects. But the rest is as elusive as a Hitchcock movie, in the sense that it appears to be meaningful, without ever really crystallising into a meaning. What exactly was Truffaut trying to learn from Hitchcock? And what exactly was the old master trying to convey to his disciple? Or, look at it this way, if you were a director about to make a film of the book how would you interpret the characters *"T"* and *"H"*?

"T", you might decide, was an enthusiastic and respectful young man, frightened of the police, yet forced here into the detective's role. (Ideal casting: the James Stewart of thirty years ago.) The part of *"H"*, on the other hand, calls for the combined skills of Sidney Greenstreet and Eric Blore. He is courteous and obliging, indeed over-obliging, and you begin to wonder to what extent, and unknown to *"T"*, he answers questions tongue in cheek. For instance, how would you have actors play the following exchange?

> *T:* The finale of ***The Lodger***, when the hero is handcuffed, suggests a lynching.
> *H:* Yes. When he tried to climb over the railings. Psychologically, of course, the idea of handcuffs has deeper implications. Being tied to something . . . it's somewhere in the area of fetishism, isn't it?
> *T:* I don't know, but I have noticed that handcuffs have a way of recurring in your movies.
> *H:* Well, look at the way the newspapers like to show people being taken to jail in handcuffs.
> *T:* True. In fact, sometimes they even circle the handcuffs with a white line.
> *H:* I remember one time when they showed the head of the New York Stock Exchange being jailed. He was handcuffed to a negro. Later I used that in ***The Thirty-Nine Steps***.
> *T:* Yes, a man and woman linked to each other. Handcuffs are certainly the most concrete—the most immediate loss of freedom.
> *H:* There's also a sexual connotation, I think. When I visited the Vice Museum in Paris, I noticed there was considerable evidence of sexual aberrations through restraint. You should try to go there sometime. . . .

"T", I should say, is a Frenchman, while *"H"* is an Anglo-Saxon: a crucial difference, since it is on the few occasions when *"T"* reveals a mild anglophobia that *"H"* becomes less courteous, and the two men take on a defined character.

> *T:* There's something about England that's anti-cinematic.
> *H:* I'm not sure I understand what you are getting at.

This nationalism appears primarily to be a rivalry about sex.

> *H:* I think the most interesting women, sexually, are the English women. . . . An English girl, looking like a school-teacher, is apt to get into a cab with you and, to your surprise, she'll probably pull a man's pants open.

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T: I appreciate your viewpoint, but I doubt whether the majority of the public shares your tastes in this matter.

More surprising than *"T"* 's rare dissent is the implication in *"H"* 's fantasy, that there are three people in the cab. *"T"* sees *"H"* as having a subtle understanding of love and, typical *"T"*, rejoices in the casting of Ingrid Bergman and Claude Rains as lovers in *Notorious,* in the pathos of Rains' shortness of stature. But is not *"T"* talking here about his own preoccupations (cf. his *Shoot the Pianist*)? When *"H"* refers to love, he does so oddly. "Sometimes I wish I could work out a love scene with two people, one each side of the room. It's impossible, I suppose, because the only way to suggest love would be to have them exposing themselves to each other, with the man opening his flies and the girl lifting her skirt, and the dialogue in counterpoint."

On the whole, though, the more *"H"* chats, the less he tells us about himself. He claims that the gruesome nature of some of his work has nothing to do with him personally ("One thing for sure: I have never any erotic dreams"). He is happy to play along with *"T"* 's theories—as, for instance, that he was conditioned by his Jesuit upbringing—but in a naughty manner that rather destroys the value of these theories.

H: Do you think there's a connection between my Jesuit upbringing and the heavy-handedness of *I Confess*?
T: Not necessarily.

One aside, perhaps, tells us more about *"H"* than anything else in the book: "I practise absurdity quite religiously." *"T"* seizes on this aside gratefully and elaborates a metaphysic out of it. "As I see it, Mr. Hitchcock, your approach is anti-literary and purely cinematic. Emptiness has a magnetic appeal to you; you see it as a challenge. The movie house is empty; you must fill it. The screen is empty and you are impelled to fill it. Your point of departure is not the content but the container. You see the film as a receptacle to be filled to the brim with cinematic ideas or, in your own terms, to be 'charged with emotion.' "

Mr. Hitchcock agrees. His films are pure inventions, as cerebral as the theorems of Euclid, and he has gauged to a nicety how far he can go in conning his audience. Films—at least his films—are not "like life." (He acknowledges that his one attempt at the documentary style, *The Wrong Man,* was unsatisfactory). You need a surface of precise, realistic detail, he argues, but beneath the surface you should push the strange laws of the cinema to their limit. "I'm not concerned with plausibility, that's the easiest part

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DOUBLE ISSUE—208 pages

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of it, so why bother.... We should have total freedom to do what we like, just so long as it's not dull." Dull directors do not realise that "there's no relation between real time and film time." They believe you need an establishing shot at the beginning of a scene: but audiences need not be shown the location straightaway. The important point is to maintain emotion, tension, suspense, preferably in close-up. Hitchcock insists that he chose to film the novel of *Psycho* (by Robert Bloch) only for its technical possibilities.

> *H:* *Psycho* has a very interesting construction, and that game with the audience was fascinating. I was directing the viewers. You might say I was playing with them, like an organ.
> *T:* They were aroused by pure film.
> *H:* Yes, that's true.

Some of us might think that the cost of pure cinema, as it is understood here, was too high—a question Truffaut does not raise, and which Hitchcock anticipates and by-passes when he confesses that, "My love for film is far more important to me than any considerations of morality." He prefers to limit the discussion to the problems of technique.

> *T:* The stabbing of Janet Leigh was very well done.
> *H:* It took us seven days to shoot that scene, and there were seventy camera set-ups for the forty-five seconds of footage. We had a torso specially made up for that scene, with the blood that was supposed to spurt from the knife, but I didn't use it. I used a live girl instead, a naked model who stood in for Janet Leigh. We only showed Miss Leigh's hands, shoulders and head.... Naturally, the knife never touched the body; it was all done in montage. I shot some of it in slow motion so as to cover the breasts. The slow shots were not accelerated later on because they were inserted in the montage so as to give an impression of normal speed.

WHAT ARE WE TO MAKE of this conversation between adults? Or, to put it in another way, how should we respond to these two dissimilar men? Hitchcock is perhaps the easier to understand. When he talks at length about the ghastly murders committed by Dr. Crippen and Patrick Mahon, one part of us plays along with him. We are amused by the levity by which he tells his anecdotes; at the same time we have reason to feel uneasy at his apparent detachment. Murder entails extreme suffering and despair—though you cannot help imagining yourself a prig at wishing to remind Hitchcock of this. But he puts this sort of pressure on us in his work. The games he plays with his audience are coercive; only spoil-sports, he intimates, would object to the fun.

Truffaut, on the other hand, appears to be more divided in his intentions. His early films contain many of the qualities that we mark a lack of in the Hitchcock output. They put us in touch with feelings of inferiority and loneliness; they approach the world tenderly, and with an awareness that happiness and goodness are possibilities worth struggling for; they are also deeply pessimistic about the permanence of these desired ideals. Truffaut's first feature, *Les Quatre Cents Coups*, a semi-autobiographical and lyrical study of a delinquent boy who runs away from home, lives for a while on the town and then is committed to a reformatory, embodies all these qualities. But Truffaut idealises the boy's delinquency and shows his parents and school-teachers, too simply, as selfish monsters. We cannot square his description of how the boy ends up in a reformatory—by a series of cruel accidents—with our knowledge of how these things usually happen. The boy tries to be tough and struts about with his trilby at an angle, as though he were appearing in a gangster movie; but Truffaut is too indulgent to this impersonation to explore its significance, and the nearest he allows the boy to reach toughness (anyway, as we see him) is to make him look cocky. In so far as we can understand Truffaut from the presence that informs his films, the director appear to resemble his young hero. Vulnerable, and somewhat ashamed of his timidity, he is a man who aspires, in imagination at least, to be as sophisticated as the inhabitants of the later Hitchcock world.

But impersonation and the games people play contain a far more potent reality than either Truffaut or Hitchcock allow for—and it is in this particular blindness that they have at least one negative attribute in common. Oddly, Truffaut often ascribes toughness to women—as in *Jules et Jim*, where Jeanne Moreau plays a Barbara Stanwyck role, and where Truffaut is so sensitive to the feelings of the two men that it comes as a shock to realise how obtuse he can be about the woman they both love: how he refuses to explore the meaning of her actions, so that it requires some extrapolation on our part to see that she is in a desperate condition and quite insane. In effect, Truffaut dehumanises this woman. He shows her as an enigma, a motiveless Medusa, someone who is purely and simply brutal because his private mythology requires such a figure.

TRUFFAUT IS AN ARTIST in a way that Hitchcock has never claimed to be. But he is also someone easily drawn to the delinquent and callous—so that when he refers to the murdered secretary in *Psycho* as an actual person, Janet Leigh, and not as a fictional character, he plays into Hitch-

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cock's hands and becomes a willing victim to those coercive games. I am sure that, as two technicians talking about technique, their conversation at this point was serious. We have no reason to suppose that it was marked by any lip-licking at the prospect of Miss Leigh's mutilation; probably, it was less overtly cruel than, say, the content of a sick joke. But this is exactly why I would object to it. For my quarrel with Hitchcock (and, in part, with Truffaut) is that he makes too firm a contrast between daily living—and there is nothing that Hitchcock has ever said or done that makes me doubt his claims to be a model citizen and an honourable husband—and the fantasies which make up his work, and which he responds to so lightly. Fantasies, conscious and unconscious, are the essential content of films as they are of mental life; and when a notable craftsmen like Hitchcock uses them, they can, without proper care, be dangerous. But Hitchcock shrugs off his power. He assumes that his games are mere entertainments divorced from the totality of experience; mechanical contrivances—battering rams indeed—whose effect should leave us unharmed. This insensitivity to the processes of mental life results in an undervaluing of these processes, and is possibly related to the cynicism which permeates his stories (and which he admits to). For instance, his notion of "the MacGuffin," a term he takes from Kipling to cover the purpose of the action, be it to steal plans or to discover a secret, is central to his outlook. "The main thing I've learned over the years," he says, "is that the MacGuffin is nothing." Intrigues and chases, he believes, should be urgent yet meaningless; as when in *The Lady Vanishes* men die for the sake of a tune—a code, the value of whose message they have no way of knowing. None of us would want to deny Hitchcock his ingenious ironies, or the masterly skill by which he conveys his often brilliant visual ideas: but whether this results in work commensurate with an admiration of Truffaut's kind is another matter.

Or so you might think after reading this lengthy interview. But if we suppose that Hitchcock really is a frightened man and that his remarks are self-protective, what then? Is it true, then, that he takes his fantasies too lightly? In general, his characters may be sophisticates, people at home in a metropolitan culture and fully able to use its facilities; and yet at the same he shows us (as in *North by Northwest*) how these people, without any intrusion of the abnormal, are capable of creating a nightmare for themselves. The apparently bland competitiveness of the cocktail party can all too easily lead to a cliff-hanging terror so nightmarish that it needs, for the sake of plausibility, to be qualified by humour: the cliff the hero finds himself hanging from here is one of the huge sculpted heads on Mount Rushmore. Truffaut's imagination may be shaped by a conflict between a world of feeling and a world of motiveless malignity, but Hitchcock primarily appears to be concerned with control, of oneself and one's environment. That he touches on deep anxieties, and yet in his manner of speaking and style of filming remains so heavily defended against them is probably the main reason for his continuing popularity and fascination.

Eric Rhode

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POINTS OF THE COMPASS

Letter from Algiers

DURING THE late 1950s and early '60s, Algeria shared with Cuba the place of honour in the hearts of the Left. Later she ceded the primacy to Ho's Viet Nam, but still retained both respect and affection. Alone among the ex-colonial territories which had gained their independence, Algeria had done so by victory in a long and hard-fought war against a major European power. This gave the Algerians great prestige among the countries of the Afro-Asian bloc, and, as a necessary corollary of this, with the revolutionary Left. Their status and authority were confirmed by the support of Jean-Paul Sartre, the adherence of Frantz Fanon, and by the adoption, on the part of the Algerian leadership, of a revolutionary Socialist ideology. Even when it was no longer a question of fighting for Independence against Colonialism, there remained the struggle for Revolution and for *décolonisation*.

Among remaining libertarians of the Left, Algeria lost some of her credit, as the result of such episodes as the arrest and detention without trial of Ben Bella, the kidnapping and detention of Moïse Tshombe, and the hijacking of an Israeli plane. For the revolutionary Left, however, these in no way tarnished—indeed they enhanced—the Algerian image, and strengthened the reputation of the Algerians as the exponents of ruthless and consistent militancy.

The visitor to Algeria however who actually looks for signs, as distinct from declarations, of revolutionary socialism may well be disappointed. Socialisation of the economy has not gone very far, and there seems to be little disposition to carry it any further. The only really extensive nationalisations followed after the sudden departure, in self-generated panic, of the French *colons*. Their departure was not desired by the Algerians, at least at that moment, and indeed confronted them with immediate and acute problems which they would have preferred to avoid or defer. As a result of the sudden departure of the *colons*, their lands, farms, estates and other enterprises were left unoccupied and without management or direction. In these circumstances, the Algerian state was obliged to step in in order to ensure the continued functioning of these enterprises. The arrangements which were set up, known by the name of *autogestion*, were thus not due to any kind of application of socialist principles, but rather to the need to meet a practical problem. The State stepped in, because there was no one else who could, and some immediate action was required to prevent an economic collapse. It is significant that there has been no serious attempt—either then or since—to nationalise enterprises held by Algerians, whether agricultural or industrial, or even to interfere to any extent with those directed by the remaining Europeans.

The revolutionary socialist personality ascribed to the Algerians is thus something of a delusion. Though assiduously propagated by the régime, especially among other African and Asian states, it has little reality except perhaps in foreign policy alignment. What is much more important is the rise of nationalism—or rather, the genesis of a new and specifically Algerian nationality.

ONE OF THE GREAT questions which has agitated Algerians for some years past is precisely that of the "Algerian personality." A serious accusation levelled against the French colonialists—it even appears in the preamble to the constitution—is that during the period of their rule, more than a century and a quarter, they had systematically "depersonalised" Algeria. That is to say, they tried to deprive the Algerians of their language, their culture, their historic memory and personality. Though often exaggerated, sometimes to the point of absurdity, this accusation is not entirely without foundation.

This may be seen if one compares the situation in Algeria with that which exists in the two neighbouring countries, Tunisia and Morocco. Both of these were occupied by the French at a much later date and therefore for a much shorter period. Both of them retained an indigenous political authority and structure—the governments of the Sultan in Morocco and the Bey in Tunisia—and therefore retained something of their own administrative and educational systems. In both, the Arabic language remained much more vigorous than in Algeria; in both (especially in Tunisia), there was an important intelligentsia accustomed to read and write Arabic and with a solid Arab culture.

In Algeria this was not the case. The Algerian State, as it existed at the time of the French occupation, was abolished, and Algeria was in time incorporated into metropolitan France. The four coastal districts were settled with large numbers of Frenchmen and other Europeans, and French became the language of government, law, education, commerce and everyday life to such an extent that literary Arabic almost died out, except among the *uléma*. The result is that even at the present day, the French language

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remains the *first* language of expression for Algerian intellectuals of no matter what political tendency! It is the language which they learn from primary school, and in which they communicate most naturally and most readily with one another. The English reader may better understand this point if I emphasise that the French language was far more profoundly rooted in Algeria than English ever was in India. The Algerians also argued that the French had systematically and deliberately rewritten the history of North Africa in such a way as to undermine and finally destroy the Algerian sense of national identity, on the one hand by stressing the Berber as against the Arab element, on the other by imposing the French language and French culture at the expense of both. One of the first tasks of an independent Algeria therefore was to reconstitute the Algerian historical and national personality.

THOUGH THIS SUBJECT was discussed at great length, it was never really open to debate. A decision was made at an early date and could not be seriously challenged, that the Algerian personality was: one, Muslim, and two, Arab. This was of course a two-fold reaction against the French culture and Berber separatism fostered by the colonial régime. Further points were that Algeria was an African, and more specifically a North African state. These decisions are enshrined in the Algerian constitution of 10th September 1963. After proclaiming in the preamble that "Islam and the Arabic language were the effective forces of resistance against the attempt to depersonalise the Algerians carried out by the colonial régime," the constitution lays down, in its opening articles, that Algeria is a democratic and popular republic [Art. 1], is an integral part of the Arab *Maghreb*, of the Arab world, and of Africa [Art. 2], has as its motto revolution of the people and for the people [Art. 3], has Islam as the state religion (and guarantees religious freedom to all) [Art. 4] and has Arabic as the national and official language of the state [Art. 5].

THE MUSLIM ASPECT of the Algerian national personality was and indeed is a reality. During the long period of French rule it was Islam and Islam alone that remained the inner citadel of Algerian separateness. It was the *médersa*—the religious schools—and the men trained in them who preserved the Arabic language, the Islamic law, and the Arabic cultural tradition in so far as these survived at all in Algeria. During the period of struggle, when the *colons* launched their slogan of "*Algérie française*," the natural reply of the Algerians was "*Algérie musulmane*." Since independence, the régime has laid great stress on Islam. The great cathedral of Algiers has once again become a Mosque. Islam is compulsorily taught in schools at all levels, the Islamic educational system has been revived and extended, and great importance given to Islam law and other elements of Islamic tradition. President Boumédiénne himself is a pious and fervent Muslim who attaches great importance to these matters. In Algeria, for example, the annual Muslim fast of *Ramadan* is universally respected, and it is virtually impossible to obtain food or drink in public during the days of the fast. Algiers is acquiring the aspect of a Muslim city, with masses of young men filling the cafés and standing about in the squares—and no young women, except for a sprinkling of foreigners, the wives and daughters of the remaining French and of the *coopérants* (the term applied to foreign specialists in the Algerian service). It may be noted that polygamy also remains lawful in Algeria though I should say that the practice of polygamy is decreasing. All this accords ill with the internationally disseminated image of a revolutionary socialist Republic.

The second aspect of the Algerian personality, the Arab aspect, has proved more problematic. During the period of struggle for independence it was a natural choice. Apart from French, there were two languages spoken in Algeria: Arabic and Berber. As used in Algeria, both of these were the spoken patois of a largely illiterate populace. But Arabic was recognisably related to a major language of culture in a very large part of the Afro-Asian world, a language possessing very high prestige and status, political and cultural as well as religious. Berber, on the other hand, was no more than a series of tribal dialects, without even a common medium among themselves, and was furthermore rendered suspect by the fact that the Berber identity had been deliberately fostered by the French in order to counteract Arab nationalism and particularly pan-Arab unity. Arabism was also greatly encouraged from the other Arab states; in the first instance from the neighbouring countries of Morocco and Tunisia, and then, more powerfully, from the Arab countries of the Middle East and above all Egypt.

To the Algerian nationalists, it therefore seemed that in seeking to recover their identity and their soul, the Arabic language, with its great richness, could provide the medium whereby such a thing could be achieved. The alternatives, French and Berber, were both excluded for different reasons.

THE PROCESS OF ARABISATION, beginning from the primary school, continued with the gradual imposition of obligatory Arabic instruc-

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tion at all levels and the establishment of Arabic in the University of Algiers. Progress, however, has been slow, and has encountered unexpected obstacles. One of the most important obstacles that has arisen is the growing disillusionment with "Arabism" as manifested in the Arab East.

This is of several kinds. One such disillusionment is in the cultural realm. Educated Algerians know French very well—often as well as educated Frenchmen—and are accustomed to reading books, magazines and newspapers from Paris. The Cartesian spirit is deeply rooted among the Algerian intellectuals. Those of them who manage to read literary Arabic are often dismayed by the low intellectual level of the outpourings from the Eastern capitals which they compare, very unfavourably, with the level of thought and debate to which they are accustomed. Algerian readers of both speeches and ideological utterances emanating from the East are almost unanimous in their condemnation.

Another source of disillusionment is political. The defeat of the Arab states in the war against Israel in 1967 came as a great disappointment, indeed as a great shock, to the Algerians. It gave rise to a feeling of hostility and contempt which is now openly expressed. This feeling is, however, not due entirely to what the Algerians regard as the ignominious defeat and abject capitulation of the Egyptians (which they compare very unfavourably with their own performance against a far more redoubtable enemy). The hostility to the Eastern Arabs in general, and the Egyptians in particular, goes back to an earlier date. At one time there was great friendship and good will towards the Egyptians and a feeling of real gratitude towards them for their support in the Algerian struggle for independence. These feelings of good will were undermined by two major developments. The first of these was personal friction with Egyptians in Algeria. Immediately after independence, there were large numbers of Egyptians in Algeria—military, political, educational—who came to advise and guide the new Arab state on the path of independence. Algerians speak with some heat of the swaggering and boastfulness of their Eastern advisers, who spoke and acted as if *they* had won the war and *they* were now preparing to organise the victory. Algerians did not see things this way, and did not appreciate this approach.

The second source of friction arose from the numerous Algerians who visited the East and compared what they found very unfavourably with their own standards in Algeria—not only intellectual life, but also the infra-structure of the city of Algiers and even of the provincial cities, which is incomparably more advanced and more sophisticated than anything to be found in the East. These feelings were already growing rapidly. The events of June 1967 brought them to a head. I might illustrate this by noting that while in all Arab capitals troops and police had to be rushed to "protect" the American and British Embassies, in Algiers it was the Embassy of the United Arab Republic that needed protection. What is more remarkable is that Algerians seem to delight in repeating and stressing this fact. Egyptians in Algeria have a hard life. Algerians hardly ever miss an opportunity to reproach and upbraid them for their performance, and generally to indicate disapproval bordering on disgust. Their feelings are hardly warmer towards Syria or Iraq.

One result of these various phases of disillusionment has been a tendency, as I have heard, to talk more frequently and more openly of "Berber blood" and "Berber ancestry." The Algerians still insist on their Arab personality, but are much less anxious to claim Arab descent than in the past. "Berberism," emancipated from French attachments, is becoming more popular. I also find a greater stress on French culture, in which many Algerians feel that they have a share as much as have, for example, the Belgians, the Swiss, or the Canadians. Contact with other countries of French language and culture has strengthened this tendency and has reinforced Algerian consciousness of the importance and value of their French cultural heritage.

ALL THIS HAS a certain bearing on the Algerian attitude to the Palestine problem. The Algerian commitment to the Palestinian cause is still very strong—probably far stronger than in the countries bordering Palestine such as Syria, Jordan or Egypt, where there seems to be greater concern for their own safety and interests. But it is interesting that the Algerian concern for Palestine is expressed in Revolutionary and anti-Imperialist terms rather than in Arab or pan-Arab terms. A phrase which is often used is *"il faut désarabiser la question palestinienne."* This means that the struggle of the Palestine liberation movements must be seen not as an Arab struggle or cause, but as a struggle of the Palestinian people against Imperialism—that is to say, "against the Americans and their puppet Israel."

Algerians will argue that for them the Palestinian question is precisely the same as the Viet Nam question . . . with Israel as South Viet Nam, *El Fatah* as the Vietcong, General Dayan as Marshal Ky . . . and the United States as the United States. I often have the impression that the Algerians are anti-Israel because they are anti-American, rather than the reverse. They will insist that their support is for the Pales-

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tinians as a revolutionary people fighting against imperialism, not as Arabs. If one points out to them the implications of such support and on such terms for the countries adjoining Palestine, they will reply with a little smile that they quite well see the consequences and have no compunction in accepting them.

THE AFRICAN ASPECT of "the Algerian personality" is not taken very seriously in Algiers. Algerians neither feel nor look like Africans, and, apart from the cultural and historical links left by the French Empire, have little in common with Black Africa. At times indeed they utter observations which would shock and wound if overheard by black ears. Africa provides them with a stage on which to perform, and a troupe to lead. Apart from this purely political concern, it is of little interest to them.

North Africa is, however, a different matter. The *Maghreb*—Arab and Berber, Mediterranean and Islamic—is a real entity, with a common character and entity, distinct at once from Europe beyond the sea, from the Black lands beyond the desert, and from the East. It is sometimes defined as "the lands where they eat *kouskous*." In this *Maghreb*, Algeria, by virtue of her position, her capacity and her achievements, claims a role of leadership. Her relations with her immediate neighbours, Morocco and Tunisia, are correct but not cordial; with both of them there are disagreements on two levels—a clash about ideology, a quarrel about borders. The Algerians believe that, in time, both Morocco and Tunisia must follow them on the path of revolution and a greater *Maghreb*.

FOR THOSE WHO STILL believe in liberty and representative, constitutional government in the old style, the Algerian Republic is a disappointing place. As so often in the Third World, the beginning of independence has meant the end of freedom—even of such few civil liberties as may have existed under the previous régime.

Algeria is a heavily-policed state—indeed the proportion of police to the total population must be one of the highest in the non-Communist world. The city of Algiers, a populous city with a high level of education and literacy, has only two newspapers, one in French and one in Arabic; both are very *borné*, and reflect the official line on all matters. The hand of authority lies very heavy on public life.

The President is not a popular figure like Nasser in Egypt. He is a reserved and withdrawn man, whose public appearances are very few, and whose public utterances are even fewer. When he leaves his residence to go on some official visit there are elaborate and ostentatious precautions against any attempt on his life. In this as in many other matters, Algerians do not share the need which Easterners seem to feel, to conceal, disguise or beautify the brutal realities of power.

Hitherto the disagreements between the Algerians and the Egyptians have been kept from the public eye and have not really been of great significance in that no vital conflict of interests has arisen. It is possible that the Algerian leaders may at one time have had hopes of pan-Arab leadership, but their more recent mood has been one of distaste and disinterest for the affairs of the Middle East—apart, of course, from their support for the "Palestinian revolution." The recent events in Libya, however, create a new situation.

Libya under the monarchy served as a buffer between Egypt and Algeria and at the same time a point of attraction to both of them. The buffer has gone; the attraction remains. The economic needs of both Egypt and Algeria are great. Those of Algeria are certainly not as great as those of Egypt—Algeria has after all her own oil supplies, and has not suffered from the crippling burden of war that Egypt has had to bear. Algeria's needs are, however, still extensive, and her supplies of oil are far smaller than those of Libya. The vast resources and immense royalties accruing to Libya are therefore of considerable interest. There is the further point that the Algerians feel themselves to be intended by nature, history, and geography to lead and create a united *Maghreb*. This would include, besides Algeria itself, Morocco, Tunisia and, of course, Libya, which is the most attractive and most valuable of all. For a while, probably a brief while, one may expect some measure of cooperation between the Egyptian and Algerian friends of the new Libya. In the nature of things, however, it cannot be long before they come into collision. At the very least one may anticipate a period of intensive political rivalry and manoeuvring between the Egyptians on the one hand and the Algerians on the other, jockeying for positions of influence and power with the new Libyan régime, each trying to exclude the other. Libya itself is a precarious assemblage of quite distinct elements, and a resurgence of tribal and regional particularism is not excluded. In such a case I would expect to see a continuous if desultory conflict on much the same lines as in the Yemen, with the intervening parties being Egypt and Algeria—a conflict in which probably neither Egyptian nor Algerian forces would be directly involved but in which both would support Libyan factions. It is a cheerless prospect.

André Vincent

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LETTERS

Conquest on the Moon

ROBERT CONQUEST, disagreeing with my exegesis of *2001*, chooses to qualify it as self-parody, intellectually immature, and silly-clever obfuscation related to the lunatic fringe. From his heavy-handed ill-humour some points of interest to ENCOUNTER readers emerge.

The notion that "our only evidence" as to the film's meaning is "the book of the film written by the co-author of the screenplay" obligingly demonstrates just that unfamiliarity with film culture with which I reproached some (but by no means all) men of letters. Since the 1920s the virtually unchallenged critical orthodoxy has been that if a film is by any one man it is by its director, not by its script-writer, still less by a joint script-writer, and even less by a joint script-writer when his co-author also happens to be the producer and the director. It's a rule which is often applied too rigidly, but Mr. Conquest's assumption that the book of the film is gospel flies in the face of the consensus and of commonsense alike. A film is more likely to be its director's than its scenarists' for the same reason that we recognise Shakespeare as the author of Shakespeare's plays, rather than whoever wrote a story which Shakespeare found convenient to use. Amplification by visual *and* dramatic transposition is as decisive as amplification by choice of exact word. Details, in art, matter.

Arthur Clarke's book of the screenplay has no more claim to be considered the definitive account of Kubrick's movie than has Arthur Clarke's original short story, which differs widely from both. The definitive version of Kubrick's movie is Kubrick's movie. Trust the tale, not the *other* tale. *Hiroshima Mon Amour* offers us an example of director and script-writer offering different interpretations of their *finished* film. Such points apart, Mr. Conquest has quite simply failed to consult the evidence. If he had followed up the reference I helpfully provided, he would have found (in Clive James, *op. cit.*) comments on, precisely, the significance of the very real differences between the book and the film, differences due in part to the fact that changes were made in the film after shooting.

Mr. Conquest's remaining points are perverse.

1. My use of "ambivalent" and "immolated" is correct. The ambivalence lies between the prophetic and funerary overtones of the tablet. For "immolated," perhaps Mr. Conquest will allow a glimmer of literacy to the *O.E.D.*, according to whom it means, precisely, "to offer sacrifice . . . to give up . . . to serve suffering or loss." The religious connotations fit perfectly.

2. In what way is my exegesis an "arbitrary cypher"? Since every point refers to conspicuous facets of the film, it isn't arbitrary, nor is it a cypher, since these points can be and in fact were felt in a straightforward emotional way well within the compass of any normal filmgoer. They follow appropriately from the thought: "It's strange, these big apes are so meek and cowed, these human relationships are so arid. . . ."

3. *"In"* in *" 'In' Jupiter"* is in inverted commas because there can be held to be a reasonable element of doubt as to whether the astronaut is on the surface of the planet or within its gaseous mass or merely having his perceptions bedevilled in some strange way for which a film precedent is established by a bad film entitled *Journey to the Seventh Planet.*

4. If Clarke describes an "elegant, anonymous hotel suite" and Kubrick shows us "a colonial Louis XVI" room, then, precisely, the film is not the book, unless Mr. Conquest supposes that the latter is the obvious translation into visual terms of the former. How then can he simultaneously maintain that it's so recondite a style as to have left few traces? Or is he implying that I can't possibly know what colonial Louis XVI looked like, in which case how can he know what it looks like sufficiently well to assign it dates? In point of fact I'm delighted to admit that I took the description on trust from two of my furniture design students at the Royal College of Art. Since I don't claim to know everything that ought to be known, I am delighted to find discussion enriching my appreciation of this or any other film.

5. In what way are "literary men like . . . myself" (Conquest) "*more*" (my italics) "directly concerned with the whole question of meaning and communication" than those whose prime concerns are the mass media, and/or a range of art forms? Insofar as this argument has any meaning, it is reversible, and a film critic is better equipped to handle the complexities of films than any other type of critic. In fact, there is absolutely no reason why a film critic should not draw on the traditions and sophistications of other disciplines, and there is absolutely no reason why Mr. Conquest should rage at the possibility that he in his turn has something to learn from specialists in other fields.

RAYMOND DURGNAT

St. Martin's School of Art, London

PERHAPS Mr. Durgnat is right, and it's even better played deadpan. So—to take his last point first: doubtless he has seen more films than most of us, possibly he has gained rare and important insights. But the medium he has chosen to present them in is *writing*; it is a *verbal* discussion into which he has gratuitously ventured. And what I was saying is that writers are on the whole likely to be more experienced in handling and understanding words—in the conduct, that is, of rational discourse.

Generalities about how other "books of the films" and so forth may be related to those actual films are not the point. This is a particular case. The book *2001* is not a film script. It was published in connection with the film, and is not only written by Arthur C. Clarke, joint writer of that script, but has a preface by Clarke and the other joint script-writer, Stanley Kubrick, who is also the film's

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director. (It is not a matter of quoting Plutarch as an authority for *Julius Caesar*, but of quoting a prose version, approved and introduced by Shakespeare, and written by his collaborator Fletcher, of *Henry VIII*.) In the circumstances its interpretation of what is happening must have a certain authority. Where it conflicts with what actually appears on the screen, naturally it cannot take precedence. But (except on one or two minor points Mr. Durgnat does not deal with) it doesn't. Its events do not conflict with the events on the screen: its interpretations conflict with Mr. Durgnat's interpretations. (It is a fault in the film, though perhaps an unavoidable one, that events are not set forth with the explicitness of the book, and a portentous tone rather lays it open to the inventor of spurious significances—though not, of course, to the extent of justifying or even excusing him.)

Mr. Durgnat's special equipment for understanding films cannot be taken seriously. In the case of 2001, it must involve, even on his own showing, some knowledge of history and of science fiction—in both of which fields (and this is no great boast) I am clearly better equipped than he is. And the same is evidently true about elementary astronomy. As a result we get "'In' Jupiter": as I said, there is no warrant of any sort for events in the film having taken place in Jupiter in any sense whatever, physically, metaphysically, or metaphorically.

Mr. Durgnat claims that his responses to "facets" of the film were "straightforward emotional" ones. He instantly refutes himself by mentioning that he obtained his extravagant theory of the hotel room, by its style, being some sort of symbol of pre-revolutionary feeling, from a supposedly better instructed friend. (And since, evidently, nothing counts without exegesis, can I explain my, I hope, excusably frivolous dates for the "colonial Louis XVI style" which allegedly linked the room with the American and French revolutions—two thoroughly disparate events incidentally? The American Colonial period ended in 1776; Louis XVI came to the throne in 1774.) Moreover, Mr. Durgnat still hasn't explained the mysterious "old aristocrat" he has produced to inhabit these phantom styles and symbols. . . .

One doesn't want to be pedantic, but, if we must, let's look at "ambivalently" and "immolated" again. Mr. Durgnat had the black tablet "ambivalently suggesting Moses, Stonehenge, Calvinism, a headstone." In Mr. Durgnat's system—which I rightly describe as arbitrary—every large or sinister rectangular object may instantly and equally suggest every other one or anything associated, or even "Calvinism." But even then "ambivalent" remains a totally inappropriate word. "Ambivalence" is defined as having "two contrary values or qualities" (*O.E.D.*)—usually love and hate, attraction and repulsion. In what sense can "funerary" and "prophetic" be called contraries? (And, one wonders, anyhow, whether Stonehenge is "prophetic" or "funerary".) As for "immolate," Mr. Durgnat's sentence (and one well worth repeating) was, "The Blue Danube Waltz for the rotating spacecraft, as if the formal *joi-de-vivre* of the Austrian Empire were immolated in the machines (*we* don't dance, we watch free-fall on TV)."

May I conclude by repeating, just as if those who speak Mr. Durgnat's dialect were open to reason, that literature has indeed often been subjected to this cheap and easy style of significance-seeking, and that it is, as I said, a little better immunised than are the less literate arts.

Robert Conquest

London

An Impenitent's Reaffirmation

On Independent Universities — By E. J. Mishan

In replying to some of the issues raised by Mr. Donald Tyerman and Miss J. F. Maitland-Jones [Encounter, July] I shall be unable to avoid the charge of repetitiousness simply because their chief objections to my proposals appear to have been anticipated in my main article [Encounter, March]. But it was, admittedly, a long article, and I am not surprised that readers should overlook the parenthetical qualifications and footnotes that, in any case, do little to relieve the impression of cavalier fundamentalism. Nor is it hard for me to appreciate that so uncompromising a treatment of a live political issue would be uncongenial to those who court a reputation for sound judgment and realism. This can always be earned by a conspicuous display of moderation in moving with the times, and by a care to suggest nothing that the public is not just about ready to accept. Such "political maturity" has its uses, but it has little to contribute to a radical reassessment of current social policies. The economic specialist, however, or any specialist for that matter, is not a political animal. Nor should he aspire to be. His task is simply that of informing the public, unfolding the technical possibilities that are open to society and, so far as he can discern them, the range of consequences arising from their adoption. The country will be the poorer for it if ideas that at first seem doomed to political extinction are opposed on that account.

Both Mr. Tyerman and Miss Maitland-Jones appear to direct the main force of their strictures at my remarks on revolting students, which remarks are only incidental to my main theme. In the grand manner of "a plague on both your houses," Miss Maitland-Jones is impartially scathing of University administrators, dons, and students alike. As for my proposals, they can "do nothing of themselves to protect universities from the excesses of govern-

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ment or student power, or students from the vagaries of their teachers and administrators,[1] or society from the dottiness of dons and students' difficulties in settling to adult life—which are the *real* problems of university life today" (my italics). I am reminded at this point of the Hyde Park pacifist during the last war who allocated the blame for the holocaust impartially between Hitler's Germany and Churchill's Britain. Just as Britain became a war-mongering power in 1939, so apparently about 1967, the government, the dons, and the administration began to indulge in "excesses," "vagaries," and "dottiness," respectively. Having analysed the "real" problem, however, Miss Maitland-Jones does not go on to offer us a "real" solution. With greater circumspection, she asserts only that the establishment of a single Independent University (as compared with my proposals) makes "much more sense," because it would be devised to run *concurrently* with the present system, not to supersede it. Thus it would provide both students and dons with an area of "true choice . . . [which] will ensure that the needs of students, as well as those of their teachers, and the outside world, will be met."

I presume that this statement of faith is the "truncated limb on which the support for university reform more sensibly depends" and which my arguments are "stumping along in search of." If it is, I am grateful for her pointing it out to me, else I might have gone on in the simpleminded belief that a single independent university in a system of government-controlled ones provides but a modicum of choice, two independent universities provide more, and a large number more still. It remains only for Miss Maitland-Jones to formulate the alchemy which produces a single independent university as one conferring the optimal degree of choice on students and dons alike.

MR. TYERMAN, ON THE OTHER HAND, is more unyielding. He states flatly that, even if students pay full fees and receive loans instead of grants, "you will still have the same *reformers*, the same *anarchists*, and the same *nihilists* among them." And this conviction is strengthened in the peroration by a timely tautology: "No university, however costed or priced, however tied to or freed from public money, can survive as a university with a nihilist element *large enough* to call the tune" (my italics).

Since, as I have said, the point is not central to my thesis, I dwell on it briefly. Controlled experiments are rare in the social sciences. Theorems are tested, when tested at all, by recourse to sophisticated statistical methods. The phenomenon of revolting students is too recent, and the data available insufficiently documented and differentiated, to enable one to reach an empirical conclusion on the relation of fees to the degree of strife. The innocent proposition I advanced, that "the larger are university fees relative to the resources of the student and his family, the smaller is his temptation to engage in any action likely to disrupt his studies" (my footnote 17) is at least plausible since it accords with a fundamental economic theorem; to wit, the higher the price to be paid for a good (defined only as something a person wants) the less of it he will take. The "good" in this context is disruptive activity.

Now the negative relationship I conjecture between, on the one hand, the proportion of the student's (or his family's) resources spent on fees etc. and, on the other, the degree of willingness to engage in disrupting activities may be low at certain levels, and perhaps discontinuous also. But until critical statistics have been produced I see no reason to doubt the application of this economic theorem to the case of student disruption, in particular to those cases where the student and his family would really feel the pinch. The estimate of £5,000 at current prices for a three-year course in the humanities or social sciences is likely to entail some sacrifice for a goodly proportion of students electing to go to a university on these terms. My belief, that full-cost fees would *contribute*[2] to reducing student excesses, therefore remains unshaken. (I did not of course claim that it would prevent them entirely.)

I asserted also that if students persisted in disruptive activities under a full-cost private finance system it would be the students' money that would be wasted, not the taxpayers'. I further added (in support of my surmise that student excesses would be modified under the scheme proposed), that with privately financed universities, free of all state control, the legal position at least would be incontestable. The university premises would clearly be private property. Student privileges would be exactly those and no more, laid down in the regulations. And if a student did not like the regulations he was entitled, with his own money, to go elsewhere—which choice would be the more effective once the system had been changed to allow of a large number of self-financed institutions competing with respect to cost, demand, and reputation.

TURNING TO OTHER ISSUES, Mr. Tyerman and Miss Maitland-Jones apparently believe that a demonstration of possible difficulties in adopting a scheme constitutes an argument against it. I never claimed

[1] To explain university students' unrest and violence (as Mr. Tyerman does) partly in terms of a lack of the right sort of teachers, or a lack of "teacher/taught dialogue" runs the danger of conjuring up an image of lively and enquiring young minds being ruthlessly stifled by narrow and dogmatic teaching. This is not even caricature, and any contrary belief rests on a confusion between high spirits and lively minds, between torrents of clichés and the flow of ideas. The most heartbreaking single task of a university teacher (at least in the social sciences) is that of weaning students from endless parrotting of what they read and of somehow—by patience, by example, by threats, cajolery, encouragement, sarcasm—getting them simply to think for themselves.

[2] Other arrangements would contribute to the same end. After having been at school for at least twelve consecutive years there is much to be said for potential university students going out into the real world for two or three years before entering the university.

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Life & Letters Today

Cambridge

A LUNCHEON CLUB *for left-wing undergraduates at Cambridge has been formed in honour of Mr. "Kim" Philby, the spy and Cambridge graduate. Mr. Philby, a former British intelligence officer, graduated from Trinity College 36 years ago and while a student he held office in the university Labour Club. He went to Russia in 1963 after successfully tipping off Burgess and Maclean that their espionage activities had been discovered.*

The Philby Club is run by members of the University Socialist Society, which has replaced the Labour Club.

One member, Mr. D. Burford, of Peterhouse, said that the choice of the name of the club had delighted members who felt that "Kim" Philby was one of the few people in the 1930s who saw the situation in its true perspective.

THE TIMES

London

THREE MAGISTRATES *ruled yesterday that naturist magazines with colour pictures of men and girls were obscene and ordered them to be confiscated.*

So 1,455 American magazines, "Exposure and Design," "Sunrise" *and* "Nudist Adventure," *were seized by the Customs at Heathrow Airport. They were to have been distributed privately to subscribers to Sun and Health, a naturist organisation, of Clements Lane.*

Mr. John Mortimer, Q.C., for the company, told the court at Uxbridge, Middlesex: "Unclothed people have been seen in works of art from time immemorial, from Greek statues to Rodin and modern paintings. Nobody has thought fit to close an art gallery because the whole human form is shown. We can survive Venus in Dulwich Art Gallery. We can survive Hair *on stage.*

"Surely we can survive magazines with photographs of the human body as it is. It is better to see it this way than half-clothed in titillating positions when we go down the escalators for the tube."

Mr. Mortimer—author and playwright as well as barrister—suggested that the magistrates apply neither the standards of Mrs. Mary Whitehouse nor those of Mr. Kenneth Tynan. They should find a happy medium.

For the Customs, Mr. Hugh Main-Price said it was for the court to decide whether the magazines were indecent or obscene.

During the case the magistrates—two men and a woman—studied the magazines in private for 55 minutes. They retired again for 40 minutes before Mr. F. W. Westgate, chairman, said: "We find the magazines obscene and condemn them as forfeited."

DAILY MAIL

Rome

AFTER THE FIRST *round of questioning which which lasted 45 minutes Signor Salvatore Palmieri, head of Rome's Flying Squad, said: "We have still not found out the motive for the hi-jacking." But later he said it was U.S. Marine Raffael Minichiello's "rebellion against American society."*

Asked how Italian courts might deal with the case, Signor Palmieri said: "Justice is hard in America. He has faith in us. He is just a boy, a child." He said Minichiello "wanted to get away from America also because he was about to be tried. He did not have any faith in American justice. It was his intention to go to Naples where in some café or other, he hoped to meet his father."

Reporters were allowed into a room where Minichiello's equipment was displayed. He had brought with him camouflaged jungle fatigues, boots, a helmet, medicine, a long hunting-knife, a battered modified M-1 carbine with a collapsible metal stock and 250 rounds of ammunition. Also discovered belonging to him were a bottle of Scotch and two books: "Rape and Harems" *and* "Ill-met by Moonlight."

SUNDAY TELEGRAPH

Paris

PLAYWRIGHT *Marcel Archard: "The award of the Nobel Prize of Literature to Sam Beckett is a scandal which disgraces a jury more interested in showing that it is 'with it' than in literature."*

M. Edgar Faure: "The award to M. Beckett is a triumph for one of the most powerful internationals in the world. This is the Irish literary conspiracy aimed at establishing and maintaining Ireland as a literary super power."

EVENING STANDARD

Cambridge

AN INTELLECTUAL *parlour game for the long winter evenings. Francis Crick, Nobel-winning molecular biologist, mused yesterday about the proliferation of combined subjects. No one does chemistry any more. It has to be microbiological chemistry, or some such. The latest diversion at high table is to make up new amalgams. Crick's first shot, he said at the "Nature" centenary celebration, was "astro-botany," but has found he'd been beaten to it. Instead, he offered "biochemical theology," the study of the physiological process by which one gets satisfaction out of prayer.*

THE GUARDIAN

London

IN A BOOK REVIEW *in* The Observer *this week, Graham Greene vividly describes "the face of Lord Haig whom I saw as a pall-bearer at the funeral of Rudyard Kipling—a face flushed probably with indigestion but it looked like make-up, a look of savage stupidity and deep lines as cruel as the trenches of the Somme."*

The most impressive aspect of this experience, so deeply etched on the novelist's memory, is that Haig died in 1928 and Kipling in 1936.

THE TIMES

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perfection for the private-finance full-cost scheme; only that, taken as a whole, it is superior to the existing system (and better than the milder graduated tax scheme) on grounds both of equity and allocation. The difficulties they prophesy are not such as to modify my claims. Mr. Tyerman exclaims: "Suddenly to put this whole allocation of resources out into this imperfect market, with the bidding and bartering of parents and students in place of that admittedly insensitive central computer, *could be* both chaotic and inequitable" (my italics). This does reek just a little of "the superiority of socialist planning for justice and plenty over capitalist greed and chaos." But if all he means to say is that a radical change, for better or worse, is difficult, then I agree. By definition a radical reform is one which causes some upset. The change admittedly will hurt a large number of busy-bodies made eminent by, and thoroughly conversant with, the present system. And it is sure to run into political resistance—all of which I pointed out. However, I certainly go along with his final declamation: "Surely," he writes, "any new programme has got to marry the old provisions with the new pricing, by the right blend of university grants and student fees." To me, the "right blend" is obviously one hundred per cent fee and zero grant.

On the question of lending money to students, Miss Maitland-Jones asks, "who will risk the money and through what channels?" and then lays it down that "above all [such loans must] be available to the children of defaulters or criminals or lunatics." It is *possible* that this important category, the children of defaulters, lunatics and criminals, will have more difficulty in raising money under any purely private loans system, notwithstanding which it may be argued that in view of the numbers involved (perhaps Miss Maitland-Jones has the figures?) the proposed scheme is, on balance, to be preferred. However, our speculations on this topic are constrained by the facts, for such loan schemes already exist though in a somewhat less radical form than I envisage. United Student Aid Funds, Inc. (USA Funds) is a private non-profit corporation in America that is supported by the universities which vouch for loans taken out by their students. These loans bear a maximum interest rate of 7%, and up to $1,500 per annum is available for each student for graduate or undergraduate work. This organisation has helped over 200,000 students (half of them from families with incomes below $6,000 a year) attending more than 1,000 institutes of learning throughout the United States. It is significant to observe in this connection that the delinquency rate on all loans by USA Funds is less than 2%, which compares favourably with a rate several times higher on Federal loans (under the National Defence Education Act). I can think of no reason why British banks with perhaps some *initial* encouragement by the government, would be unable to lend to students at commercial rates given the formation here of a comparable organisation.

Miss Maitland-Jones' fears, that we shall have no students at all on these terms (full-cost privately financed), is tantamount to misgivings that higher education in this country, regarded as an investment, is not an economic proposition. One of the virtues of my proposed scheme is, of course, to reduce the number of students to a point where higher education is clearly perceived to be an economic proposition—and in so far as it is not an economic proposition, I do not know how Miss Maitland-Jones proposes to justify using the taxpayers' money for that purpose. In my optimism I had supposed that, although the numbers of students would have to be reduced before higher education could be justified on any economic criterion, the resulting number would still be positive. If it turns out, as Miss Maitland-Jones appears to believe, that the number is zero I will reluctantly conclude—as I pack my bags for America—that, at present, the nation does better for itself by investing in industry than in higher education.[3]

FINALLY, I WOULD LIKE to avail myself of the courtesy of the Editor in order to strengthen a couple of weak joints in the structure of the main argument which have been kindly brought to my attention by friends and colleagues.[4]

The first has reference to the calculations of the full cost of university education. I had opted for including the full salaries of teaching staff in the costs of higher education on the grounds that any time spent in writing papers for publication adds to the value of the university teacher, and that the knowledge he thereby contributes to his subject is ultimately passed on to students. This is largely true, but on second thought I recognise that it is not, strictly speaking, an economic argument.

Why do highly trained men become university dons in this country when for many of them opportunities elsewhere appear much more lucrative? One answer is that in a university they will have time enough to engage (*a*) in research that further enhances their reputation and market value and/or (*b*) consultation work which is highly regarded and highly rewarded. Unless the university afforded them the leisure to engage in these pursuits it would be unable to buy the teaching services of skilled, and often gifted, individuals at government-determined rates of pay. I doubt whether any senior member of a reputable university would agree—given the existing range of opportunities at home and abroad—to devote his full time to teaching at an unchanged salary. So long as the preference among the more intellectually active dons is for using more of their time for research and writ-

[3] I pray that neither Mr. Tyerman nor Miss Maitland-Jones will now berate me for neglecting the "social advantages" of higher education or for thinking about the problem in gross commercial terms. I took up a lot of space in dealing with these popular misapprehensions.

[4] In particular, I am indebted to Mr. Nigel Lawson of *The Spectator*, Professor Alan Prest of Manchester, Mr. Colin Clark of Oxford, and Mr. Tyrrell Burgess of the London School of Economics. Though they pointed out the deficiencies of the logic at certain points, none are to be implicated in my attempts to remove them.

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ing rather than for teaching, their salaries can be regarded as the supply price necessary to provide the current level of teaching. Raise the teaching load of dons and, unless the salary scale is raised, some of the more intellectually active will move out of British universities. Lower the teaching load, and you can attract more dons at the present salary scale. In short, then, although some qualification and elaboration may permit a more precise statement to be made, it accords with the economic facts of life to regard the salaries of university dons, at least those of the senior and more distinguished dons, as the costs of teaching alone.[5]

THE SECOND POINT concerns the question of equity. I alleged that under the existing grants scheme the working classes were, on balance, being taxed in order to provide free education for the children of middle- and upper-class families. I provided no statistics to support this allegation and rested my case on the existing tax structure. This, I admit, does not constitute a proof of my allegation. A proof would require that the tax revenue for the £250 millions or so spent on higher education be traced back to the tax-paying groups. We must be in a position to say, "of this increment of tax of £250 million, needed for higher education, £200 million was raised from the working-class group...." But in a single integrated budget it is not possible to attribute revenues collected from particular groups to particular expenditures. If we were today to reduce public expenditure on, say, higher education, the taxes to be reduced or abolished could be distributed among the taxpayers in any way the government determines.

Nevertheless, we can reason as follows once definitions of "working class" and "middle class" have been settled. If working-class families are, say, three times as numerous as middle-class families, and if middle-class students are three times as numerous as working-class students, then—in order for the middle-class family to pay no less on the average than the working-class family for each pound's worth of educational benefit—the middle-class family would have to pay, on the average, about nine times the increment of tax paid by the average working-class family. This seems to me a highly unlikely outcome.

But we need not stop here. In order for the marginal tax per family paid for a given pound's worth of higher education to be *proportional* to the gross earnings, the middle-class families should on the average pay a marginal tax that is $9R$ times the average tax paid by working-class families—R being the ratio of average middle-class family income to average working-class family income. If this ratio is 3, the increment of aggregate tax would then require middle-class families to contribute 27 times as much as the incremental tax paid by the average working-class family. Obviously a *progressive* tax would require the average middle-class family to contribute *more* than 27 times as much as the average working-class family. If 9 times as much marginal tax is unlikely, more than 27 times as much is inconceivable.

Now, so long as one cannot attribute a part of the revenues collected in any year, from all taxpayers together, to a particular item of public expenditure, one cannot assess the distribution of the burden of financing higher education alone. For all that, it is meaningful to argue that, contrary to expectations, the scheme has been inequitable and "regressive". For there was a time when the nation had the option of financing higher education, or more of such education, by full-cost fees paid directly by predominantly middle-class families, wanting to buy education for their children, as an alternative to financing it by additional taxation. It was apparently believed (on what evidence?) that the latter alternative was the more *equitable* and *progressive* one, one extending educational opportunities to the underprivileged. Whereas if it were possible to go back and determine in each period just how the *increment* of public revenue necessary to meet an augmented public expenditure (augmented, that is, to include provision for more university education), was raised one could show, in principle, that the reverse was true.

The question can, then, be meaningful without there being much hope of answering it by recourse to the facts. Hence the usefulness of hypothetical calculations such as those above in serving to overcome the strong political (or, rather, ideological) objections to the proposals for a change-over to private finance of higher education.

[5] In economic parlance it is more accurate to say (notwithstanding that some published work is generally expected of university teachers) that the salary paid is the supply price of teaching only, with intra-marginal staff members enjoying a "surplus" or economic rent.

Weightman's Outsider

MORE than one reader, I am sure, of John Weightman's brilliant article, "The Outsider Rides Again" [ENCOUNTER, November] found it a little difficult to make out how much were the author's own insights and how much he owes to that work he cites on *The Picaresque* by Lance Robson, especially since the book seems unlocatable. Could the author give us a proper reference?

R. S. WINTHROP

Oxford

THE ARTICLE expressed my own ideas about the picaresque but, being uncertain how far I should believe in them, I thought I could legitimately attribute them to an *alter ego*. I had a vague, possibly erroneous, memory of a short story by Borges in the form of a fake book-review. I apologise to all those readers who looked in library catalogues or went to bookshops. I assumed—wrongly, as it turned out—that certain details would make the spoof obvious.

JOHN WEIGHTMAN

London

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Finding Something Out?

I AGREE WITH Mr. Lionel Tiger ["The Dangers of Finding Something Out," ENCOUNTER, December] that some social scientists, some psychologists, and some other generalisers about our species, including some ethologists, do not sufficiently know their biology.

However, even if they did, it would not be all that relevant to what I was discussing in my article ["The Unnatural History of Human Aggression" November]—the kind of assumptions that are now being based on animal behaviour. For there are many other things that social scientists don't know or largely ignore—for instance questions of morals and art.

What Mr. Tiger and I are arguing about is in short the definition of the human. In my usage what distinguishes the human from the animal is that the human being is essentially a moral being. That is an assumption too; but it is based on the observation that some members of our species throughout history have been able, to some marked degree, to come to an understanding of themselves and have hence been able to contain their competitiveness or their actual hostility towards their fellows and even to respect the freedom of others and accept some responsibility towards them. That has sometimes applied even to intimate personal relations, even between some men and some women. Therefore, it is not entailed that all members of our species are absolutely and fatalistically determined by their biological past and their animal heredity.

It may be true that male-bonding with its aggressive exclusiveness has considerably helped to produce the typical human society as we know it, anyway in the West. But many people, including many men, are dissatisfied with society in so far as it has this infrastructure of competitive aggression. That may still be a minority impulse but perhaps we should try to encourage it, rather than continue to neglect it, by re-orientating our psychological and moral education. Of course, it comes down to: Who are "we"? (and hence to: who is human?).

The scientist—including the social scientist, and now the ethological generaliser—really gun for their own professional group and interests. Mr. Tiger guns for male-bonding, as he shows by assuming that there are two biological categories which are totally distinct and indisputably recognisable. Except in the narrowest organic sense. that still seems to be arguable.

I don't know what he hopes or expects to "find out" that is new or even interesting. I seem to have been reading about biological necessity all my life: from the time when I first came across Winwood Reade's interpretation of the cultural "Martyrdom of Man"—which turned out to be the martyrdom of woman, for whom (as for most of the race, but not all) subjection had been A Good Thing—to the time when, with the rest of humanity, I suffered from the effects of Nazi ideology.

I don't see how a strictly biological investigation into what, in life and practice, is the way that human beings work out their actual societies, is going to be exceptionally useful or even relevant.

KATHLEEN NOTT

Horsham, Sussex

Talking of Gandhi

Shortly after Gandhi's death Francis Watson travelled all over the world recording conversations with people who knew him personally. This year Hallam Tennyson went to India to find out how far his influence still persists. Together these broadcasts provide a fascinating insight into the qualities of this extraordinary man.

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"Where Did It All Go Wrong?"

ONE QUESTION for Mr. Raymond Fletcher [ENCOUNTER, November]: What is the point of Raymond Williams making a critique of our society (a critique Mr. Fletcher agrees with) if his concrete, political proposals are to be ridiculed and dismissed, not even disagreed with, let alone rationally discussed?

Rarely have I seen the bitter pill of eaten words so shamelessly swallowed. Mr. Fletcher's article shows that he could not make the conceptual and moral breakthrough to an authentic socialist vision. Amidst a plethora of *meae culpae* he rationalises his retreat to social democracy. It is a sad spectacle, and the jolly tone does little to disguise it.

IAN MARSHALL

London

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"Rootless Cosmopolitans"?

PROFESSOR MAX BELOFF in his article "Rootless Cosmopolitans" [ENCOUNTER, November] gives an admirable account of the situation of the present-day Jew, but there is one conclusion he draws which I think must be seriously challenged.

Indeed, as he points out, the Jew cannot today, any more than in the past, shake off the albatross of his Jewishness. He may, perhaps, shift the burden from his chest to his shoulders in the pretence that what he cannot see does not exist; but it is, nevertheless, there for everyone else to see. and he himself cannot but notice its weight. Far from this being a reason for him to withdraw from any activity in his "host society," it is essential, because of his Jewishness, to identify himself with whatever his conscience dictates. To do otherwise would be a betrayal both of his Jewishness and of his fellow nationals.

Professor Beloff claims to be only a "great-grandchild" of the Ghetto, but his cautionary attitude that "revolutionary activity by Jews is playing with fire" and that "Jews who play along with such movements do not know what they do," surely reflects a yearning to re-immure himself in a Ghetto of the spirit. History should have taught him that Ghettos are both unattractive and unsafe places. Or, does he think that by withdrawing himself from legitimate activity as a member of his wider society, the Jew will recede unnoticed into the landscape and eventually become painlessly assimilated?

As a Jew, I must confess that either of these alternatives seems singularly unalluring. If suffer I must for being Jewish, I, for one, should much rather bow to the dictates of my conscience than cringe before my persecutors.

H. LEWIS BERG

Manchester

MR. H. LEWIS BERG clearly misunderstands the purport of the argument in my article. I neither suggest that Jews should abstain from public activities in the countries of which they are citizens, nor do I suggest that they should limit their activities in some particular way. All I was trying to convey was that the Liberal Democratic forms of government, which exist in a number of Western European and North American countries, have proved to be the most receptive to the demands of Jews for a certain distinctiveness, and that those who seek to overthrow these societies by conspiracy or violence, without having any clear idea of what might come to substitute for them are endangering not so much themselves as the community to which they claim to belong.

MAX BELOFF

All Souls College,
Oxford

AUTHORS

Harold Orlans is an American social scientist on the staff of the Brookings Institution in Washington, D.C. He is the author of many works of sociology and economics. His article will be included in a forthcoming volume, *Government, U.S.A., In 2000* A.D., edited by Harvey S. Perloff, and prepared under the auspices of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences Commission on the Year 2000. The illustration in Mr. Orlans' text was specially drawn for ENCOUNTER by **Jaro Slav,** a young European artist currently living in London. . . .

Marcus Cunliffe is Professor of American History at the University of Sussex. Among his books are *Soldiers & Civilians* (Eyre & Spottiswoode, 1969), *American Presidents and the Presidency* (1969), *The Literature of the United States* (revised edn., Penguin, 1967), and *George Washington* (1958). . . .

Thomas S. Kuhn is Professor of the History of Science at Princeton University. Among his books is *The Copernican Revolution*. . . .

André Vincent has recently been travelling in North Africa. . . .

Eric Rhode is the author of a book of film criticism, *The Tower of Babel* (1966). . . .

Anthony Burgess writes regularly for ENCOUNTER. His most recent books are *Urgent Copy* (Cape) and *Enderby Outside* (Heinemann). . . .

Günter Eich is a well-known German writer of plays and stories. His dramas for sound radio have won him many prizes. He was born in 1907, and having studied in Berlin, Dresden and Paris, lives these days in Bavaria. . . .

Cover design by **Colin Banks** and **John Miles.**

ENCOUNTER Magazine is published in London by Encounter Ltd. (25 Haymarket S.W.1), in association with the International Publishing Corporation (33 Holborn, E.C.1).

Increase in Price

IT IS with much regret that we have had to raise the price of ENCOUNTER with the present issue. This increase, which is the first since September 1967, has been forced upon us by continually rising costs. The new subscription rates (which include postage) and the single copy prices are shown on page 1 of this issue. There are special rates for full-time students.

MADE AND PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN BY
WILLIAM CLOWES AND SONS, LIMITED, LONDON AND BECCLES

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